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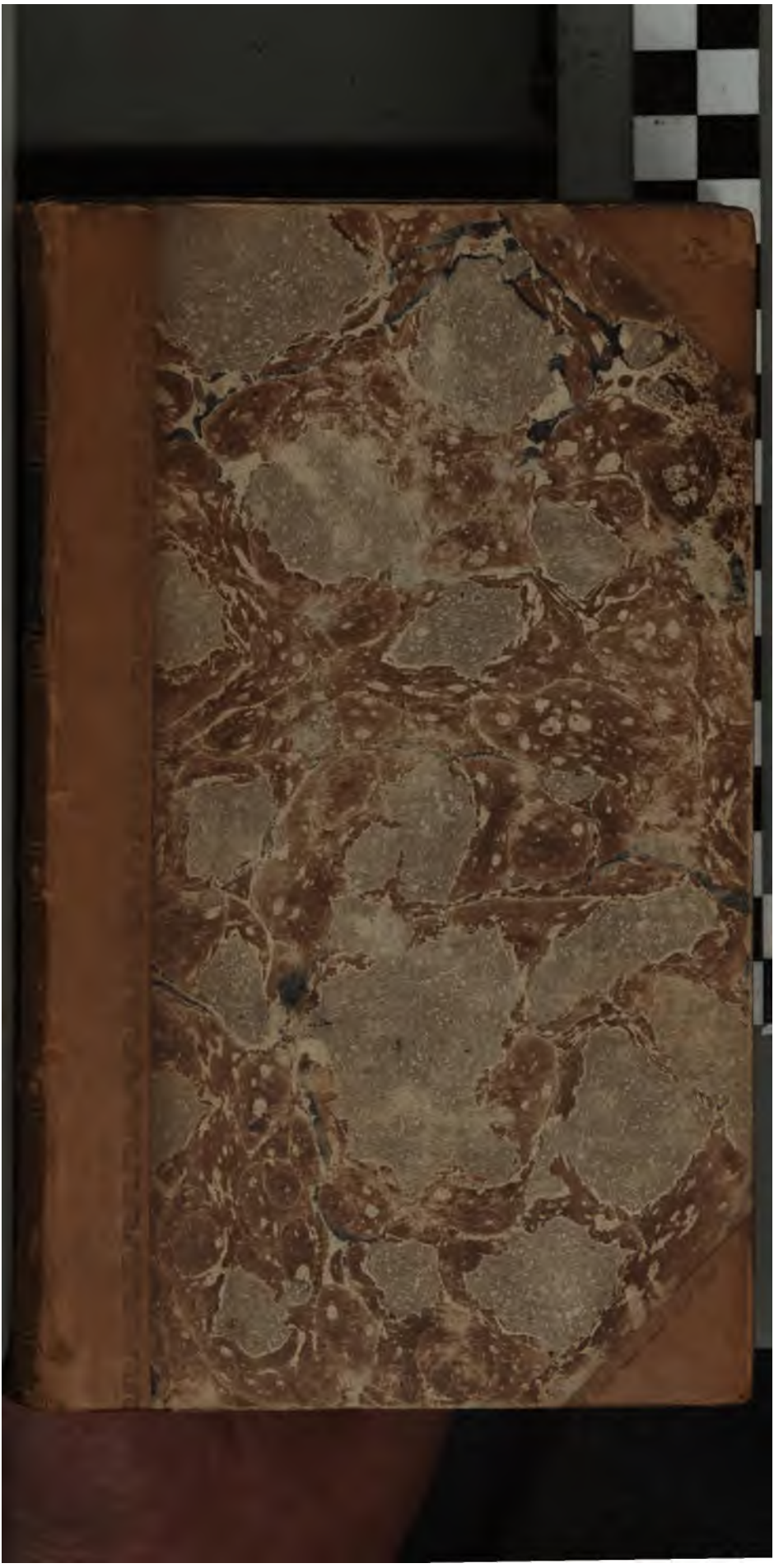

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A TALE.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-street, London.

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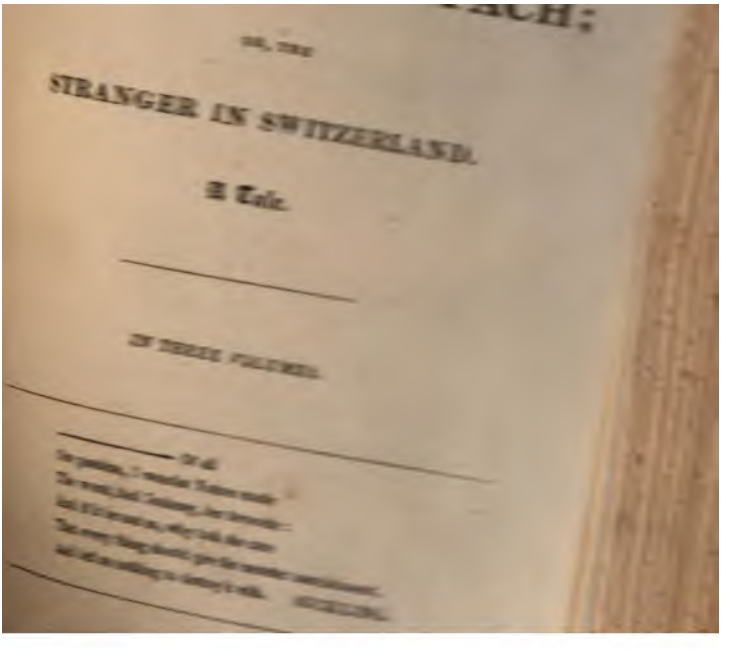

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CHATEAU OF LEASPACH;

OR, THE

STRANGER IN SWITZERLAND.

A Tale.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

——————— Of all
Our passions, I wonder Nature made
The worst, foul Jealousy, her favourite :
And if it be not so, why took she care
That every thing should give the monster nourishment,
And left us nothing to destroy it with. SUCKLING.

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CHATEAU OF LEASPACH.

CHAPTER I.

Ev'n now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down, a pensive hour to spend.
The Traveller, by GOLDSMITH.

The Chateau.

"THE storm increases in violence," observed Mr. Everard to his daughter Julia, as they sat by a blazing wood fire, in one of those vast and sombre chambers with which the ancient chateaus of Switzerland abound: "the wind rages with greater fury than I have known it to do for many a winter. I trust that all is in security below, as we must ex-

pect a severe and boisterous night." Mr. Everard rang the bell, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the domestics had been attentive to guard against any accident that might occur to the building, from the threatened tempest.

"It will soon be past, I hope, sir," said Julia, as she arose, and went to the casement to regard the appearance of the sky; but although the moon had risen, dark and heavy masses of clouds wholly obscured its light. "It is a fearful night, indeed," she continued; "I trust no unfortunate traveller will have to encounter its violence upon the heath. The accident of the last winter makes me tremble at the sound of a returning storm."

"Fritz," said Mr. Everard, to an aged domestic who now entered the room, "be careful that all without is well secured for the night, as the weather is menacing."

"I saw every thing safe, sir, at sunset,"

set," replied Fritz; "the storm is tremendous, and I warrant the tall pines of the Jura bend before it. The snow drift has set in; and if it last till morning, it will be no easy matter to find one's way over the heath. I wouldn't be there just now, your honour, for more than these old limbs are worth, as the pitfalls, by this time, must be covered. This December is a bad month here."

"It is, indeed, old man," answered Mr. Everard. "Do you think the lights of the chateau, were we to expose them, might be perceived from the heath, should any one have the misfortune to be benighted?"

"I fear, not while the snow drives, sir. For the chateau, it has stood worse weather than this; but God help the wretch who has no roof to cover him in such a night!—There was a blast!" he exclaimed, as the casements, yielding to the increasing fury of the

gale, shook, with a degree of violence, that seemed to threaten their instant destruction. "I never remember such a hurricane, except that dreadful night, your honour, in Nova Scotia, when the signal-tower at Fort Sandwich, where you were stationed, was carried into the sea. Dear! dear! that is now good sixteen years ago—I shan't forget it, were I to live the age of Methuselah. I recollect, as if it were yesterday, the room rocked like a transport in a squall;—then, when the tower fell with a crash, like a volley of sixty-four pounders, your honour seized my la——"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Everard, who had hitherto lent but partial attention to the discourse of Fritz, and had paced the room with folded arms; "Peace, sir, I command you!" he said, with sudden anger. "You forget yourself—leave the room instantly!" while, with a gesture too expressive to be misunderstood, and too imposing to be disputed,

disputed, he pointed to the door, as every limb trembled with violent emotion. Without reply, and humbly, the old man hastened to quit the apartment, conscious of having imprudently, although involuntarily, offended his master.

Startled at her father's tone, Julia turned towards him from the casement, and was alarmed at the stern expression his countenance had assumed, and the agitation which shook his frame announcing that some chord had been incautiously and abruptly touched, which vibrated painfully to his heart. On the servant's retiring, he continued to pace the apartment for some time in silence, evidently endeavouring to subdue the feelings caused by the revival of some fearful recollection; and Julia, who had occasionally observed him thus moved, had learned, by experience, the propriety of not disturbing his meditations,

or intruding, at such a moment, on his attention. To the effect of music alone she knew her father was sensible on such occasions, and that it only would be efficacious in soothing his troubled spirit, when the remembrance of the past, whatever it might be, would intervene to ruffle the general calmness of his temper.

Her harp was the talisman to which, on the present occasion, she had recourse, to dispel the clouds from her parent's brow. On it she used to practise the simple and pathetic airs of the country they inhabited, of which he was fond, and which seldom failed to divert his attention, and restore him to tranquillity; producing a result so opposite to what they have been proverbially known to operate on the natives, when heard in other lands than that which gave them birth.

For

For a short time Mr. Everard remained inattentive to the music, but at length he paused by his daughter's side, regarding her with an expression of melancholy which soon yielded to that of fond endearment, as she exerted her powers to please him who concentered in himself her best and warmest affection. Her performance was arrested by the reappearance of Fritz, bearing refreshments for the supper, which he placed, in silence, on the table; but observing that the severity of manner which he had unintentionally provoked in his master had vanished, he ventured to address him.—"Is it your honour's pleasure that the light be placed on the turret? as Louis says he heard, but now, as he thinks, a voice from the heath."

"It is but fancy, I trust," replied Mr. Everard; "the wind whistling through these long corridors often deceives the ear; but certainly it will be well to suspend the light from the parapet

above, and let some one listen whether the sound be renewed from that quarter. We must, if possible, prevent the recurrence of those accidents which have too frequently happened at this season."

The tempest had now really risen to an alarming height, and a loud and violent crash without gave evidence that even some one of the ancient and mighty trees, in the vicinity of the chateau, had not been able to resist its fury. At the same moment, Julia hastily arose and proceeded towards the casement.—"I thought," she said, "I heard a noise from the plain; but the howling of the wind scarcely permits one to distinguish other sounds."

Mr. Everard, on this, immediately left the room, to see that the orders he had given were duly executed. Ascending the narrow and spiral steps of the tower, he found Louis and another servant employed in placing the large lanthorn,

lanthorn, necessarily reserved at such times, to guide the benighted traveller in his search for shelter. When they had succeeded in placing it, all gave attention to catch any distant cry; but nothing was heard to confirm their former suspicions.

"Saint Gervais be good to me!" said Louis, breaking silence; "I could have sworn that I heard the cry of some one; but there is such a concert in the forest above, that I may have mistaken. I wouldn't be upon the heath this night to be the pope himself; not that the holy father has much to brag of either, since those infidels the French have made him prisoner: it is for that, they say, the storms are worse now than they used to be in old times; and when his holiness takes off the fisherman's ring from his finger, pere Isidore says, he can raise a tempest enough to drive his enemies into the Red Sea. I remember——"

"Hark!" said Mr. Everard, "surely there was a cry for help!"—On the servants also agreeing in thinking that the sound of a human voice had been borne thither by the wind—"Ring the bell of the chateau," he continued; "it may attract the attention of any wretched being haply exposed to the inclemency of the night, and direct him hither."

The bell was accordingly tolled, and after some time the wind became less violent at intervals; but nothing further could be heard to confirm or dissipate their apprehensions.

Mr. Everard, at length, on quitting the tower, directed that the domestics should alternately keep watch, and that they should immediately answer any noise that might be heard. Julia's fears in some measure subsided, on her father's communicating that the sounds were probably those of the wind, as they had not

not been renewed, or if so, must be heard, especially as the tempest had in some measure abated. Drawing their chairs near the fire, they commenced their repast, which was undisturbed by any report of an alarming nature. The storm that had before raged with unremitted fury, returned now only at intervals; and during the pauses caused by its temporary cessation, the servants had endeavoured to ascertain if any fellow-creature was in need of assistance, but without effect.

On the entrance of Fritz, when the repast was ended, he informed his master that he had just ascended the turret, and that although the fury of the gale was diminished, nothing indicated any person's being upon the heath; and that as the snow had ceased to fall, and the moon now afforded light, there was little peril at the moment, should any one have wandered from the road.

"You tremble with cold, old man," observed Mr. Everard, in a tone intended to reassure him; "you must leave such service to younger limbs, better able to encounter the keen air of a winter's night."

"Your honour is always kind and considerate," replied Fritz. "Times are changed with me indeed; and I am not what I was when I first entered your honour's service in Nova Scotia: even then I had seen many a hard campaign with our poor Hessians, of which few remained to tell the story: many a scalp of them hangs within an Indian wigwam, poor fellows! but I was spared for a better birth, when your honour purchased my discharge.—Dear! dear! eighteen years have passed since, like a wedding-feast: I remember it as well as if it was but yesterday; it was just three years before your honour was——"

"Enough," said Mr. Everard, hastily, and with evident anxiety to arrest the current

current of the old man's garrulity, or to prevent reference to events which the calculation of Fritz seemed likely to revive: "remove the things, and let Louis be relieved from his post, as all danger, I hope, is now over."

After some time passed in conversation, Mr. Everard embraced his daughter, and retired to rest; while Julia remained alone, absorbed in meditation on the occurrences of the evening. The sudden anger of her father towards the servant had disquieted her: she knew that he was subject to visitations of melancholy; but she could not comprehend what circumstances could create the painful feelings that the occasional allusions of Fritz to the past so forcibly excited. Nothing that had ever transpired tended to offer a clue to the secret of her father's sorrow; and she had never attempted to elucidate the mystery, or develop the hidden causes of his unhappiness,

piness, conscious that his own reserve was a tacit command to forbear.

The inhabitants of the chateau had retired to rest but a short time, when the loud barking of the watch-dog, and the sound of horses' feet, aroused the attention of Julia: loud and repeated knocking at the great gate announced that some person sought admittance; while, as the wind had now greatly subsided, she was enabled to hear the bolts withdrawn, and the voice of Louis demanding the business of the untimely visitor. Fearing the occurrence of accident, she hastily arose, and from the casement heard a man's voice demanding to see Mr. Everard without delay. An arrival at the chateau at any period was matter of rare occurrence; but at that season, in a tempestuous night, and at an hour so unseasonable, it caused her the greatest surprise, and seemed of strange and extraordinary import. Anxious

ious for her father's safety, she wrapped a robe around her, and entered the gallery upon which her chamber opened, and which overlooked the vast and spacious hall of the chateau, whence she presently observed Louis enter, conducting a stranger.

"My master has for some time, sir, retired to rest," observed the servant: "would you that he should be disturbed?"

"My business is of moment," replied the visitor, "and brooks not delay: inform Mr. Everard that one desires to see him, and that immediately."

The servant retired to obey; and Julia examined, with intense curiosity, the stranger, who now paced the hall. His figure was tall and commanding; but as he remained covered by a large military cloak, she could not distinguish his features. During the servant's absence, the

the hurried manner in which he moved, indicated extreme impatience; and a slight feeling of apprehension for her parent seized her, as she scrutinized the mysterious unknown, who had braved no ordinary perils to communicate with him at that solitary hour; but the recollection of the many domestics who surrounded them, soon dissipated her fears. Louis now returned, to say that Mr. Everard would wait upon him in a short time in his study, when the stranger motioning him to lead the way, followed in silence to the opposite extremity of the building where it was situated. She soon heard her father leave his chamber, and for a considerable period all was hushed, until all the servants seemed in movement, and apparently preparing refreshments for the visitor. Fritz at the moment entered the hall below, giving directions that the stranger's horse should be taken care of, when she seized the opportunity of calling

ing to him, and inquiring who was the person closetted with her father? As the old man looked upwards to reply, she observed by the light he held, that the habitual gloom of his features was in a great measure dispelled, and that his voice and action displayed a degree of vivacity and satisfaction wholly in contradiction to his general character.

"Lord love us, my lady, I can't say exactly!—he is, my lady—that is, I really can scarcely say what he is, or what his business may be; but they must have (that is, I suppose they have) much to talk about; and I hope, Miss Julia, that the visit bodes us no harm. Dear! dear! I always foretold—but time will shew. Do not remain longer in the cold night air, my young lady, I beseech you. His honour desired me particularly that you should not be disturbed. Good-night, my lady!" and ere Julia could again address him, he

he hurried away to give his orders, with a degree of gaiety little consonant with his age and habits, and contrary to what she had ever before witnessed in him.

It was evident that the man was not wholly ignorant of the purport of the visit, or of the person of the stranger; but as he had been in her father's service long previous to her birth, and had evinced the most cautious reserve on points which she had endeavoured to develop, at first through childish curiosity, but subsequently from a more reasonable anxiety to ascertain the circumstances of her earlier age, she had long forborne, from a sense of propriety and obedience, to press upon him questions to which he was indisposed fully to reply. His hesitation on such occasions was so contrary to his general garrulous disposition, that she readily comprehended his tongue had been restrained by her father's commands; and filial

respect

respect forbade her to endeavour to ascertain what he had deemed it prudent to conceal. Retiring to her chamber, sleep fled her eyes, and her thoughts incessantly dwelt on the unusual event of the night.

As day broke, she was aroused by the descent of Mr. Everard to the hall; when unable to resist the desire of again observing the person of the stranger, she entered the gallery, and in a few moments she beheld him below, accompanied by her father. A deathlike paleness overspread the countenance of the latter, and his features bore an impression of melancholy, which seemed the vestige of recent and profound emotion, while the subdued tone of his voice proved that he had been deeply affected by the interview with his visitor. They paused often below to converse, and the emphatic gesture and energetic action of each, indicated that the subject of

their

their discourse had been equally interesting to either.—" The dawn breaks, Everard, and I must depart," said the stranger, in a louder tone. " Reflect on what you have heard: you have been the victim of a sad and fearful delusion; but as the beam of day, which now appears to chase obscurity, the dark clouds that have so long lowered on your fortunes will be quickly dispelled. You are now the master of your fate, as I hope, and your heart and conscience will direct you how to regulate it."

" Fear not!" replied Mr. Everard, in broken accents; " I know my duty, and shall fulfil it."

A servant at this moment entered to announce that the stranger's horse was prepared; and the interruption induced them to speak so low, that their conversation was almost wholly inaudible.—" Her fate—your happiness depend upon it!" was all she could distinguish, as he grasped her father's hand, in bidding him

him farewell ere he left the hall. Mr. Everard remained for some moments, lost in meditation, on the spot where they had separated, until the return of the domestics recalled him to himself: he then hastily left the place, and proceeded to the library.

Julia descended, at the usual hour, to the breakfast-room, where her father soon joined her: he appeared in a great degree to have recovered his tranquillity; his air was more serene and undisturbed, yet as he saluted his daughter, with even more than ordinary affection, she saw a tear steal down his cheek. In feeling the necessity of adverting to the occurrences of the night, to which Julia from delicacy refrained to allude, he apparently encountered much difficulty; but at length broke a long interval of silence on either side, by an introduction of the subject.—"You were not alarmed, I trust, my love, by the unexpected visit

follow the course of the Rhine, and pass through Holland; and even by that route, must be prepared to overcome innumerable obstacles. Although I shall be furnished with all attainable means of assuring my safety, and furthering my progress, many impediments will be thrown in my way, the unpleasant consequences of which your presence could only tend to increase. The season is also hostile to such an undertaking; and without these considerations, the nature of the business that demands my presence in England, will so wholly occupy my time and attention, that you would find yourself neglected and deserted, in a country to which you are as yet an entire stranger. Should the result of my journey be unfavourable—should my undertaking be rendered fruitless," he added, with a sigh, "it is then my resolve to pass the remainder of my days on this spot: on the contrary, I shall hasten my return, and if the event should

answer

answer to my ardent prayers, we shall establish our residence in my native land."

The affection of Julia towards her father was ardent and sincere; the seclusion in which they had long lived—the love he had constantly displayed towards her—the purity of his life and character, had more than ordinarily endeared the child to her parent; and on her part, she regarded him as her best and only friend, and the exclusive earthly tie it was permitted her to acknowledge. Her grief was proportionate to her affection, as he announced the probability of his being speedily separated from her; and her mind dwelt with anguish on the idea of being divided from him. Her tears flowed fast as Mr. Everard endeavoured to console her.

"We are all subject, my Julia," he continued, "to the operation of circumstances which we are not allowed to

control; but it shall be my care, as it is my most anxious desire, to render the period of our separation as little painful as possible. I leave it to your choice to reside either at St. Ursule's, or at the chateau; and in the latter case, you may have any of the friends you esteem so much at the convent, to bear you company until my return."

Julia strove to repress her tears, as she acknowledged her father's kindness and attention to her comfort.—"Many reasons," she continued, "would render it more desirable for me to remain at the chateau, as changes have taken place at St. Ursule's which would detract much from the pleasure I formerly enjoyed there. I would certainly be grateful for the presence of a friend; and were it permitted me, I would select her who has long shewn me such peculiar affection, and even bestowed on me a parent's care."

"You mean sister Mary?"

"If

"If you should deem it proper, I would prefer her society, my dear father. Independent of her attachment to me, her character and conduct, during the many years she has inhabited St. Ursule's, would render her particularly eligible as a companion during your absence."

"I fear you will not easily gain her assent, my love, to your proposition, as you have often told me, that although she has not taken the vows, she has adopted the strict seclusion of the professed nuns."

"While I was there, she did certainly; but latterly she writes me that her declining health, and the entreaties of the lady abbess, have induced her to relax much of the severity of her retirement."

"You have my fullest consent, then, my love, if you can overcome the reserve you have ever said she retains towards those of her own country, and her

refusal to communicate or correspond with them."

"That, indeed, is the difficulty I most dread, sir. Her resolution, in that respect, surprised us all; and sister Justine, who is the most censorious saint that ever existed, and who, when not at prayer, has no higher gratification than to speak ill of all the world, did not spare sister Mary, in her speculations on the cause of her extraordinary reserve. But we know that poor sister Justine only took the vows when those of her admirers had proved false; and that she became a nun when all hopes of being a wife had failed. At her prayers she skips playfully over all supplications for her fellow-creatures; but she chaunts her anathemas as fervently and distinctly at the altar, as, had she been permitted, she would have done the bridal yes, on the same spot."

"Who is censorious now, Julia?"

"True, sir; but when her envious scythe,

scythe, which should have grown somewhat polished, after mowing down reputations without number, struck rudely at the good and unoffending sister Mary, subsequent to her attending the sick bed of her very calumniator for a week, we all felt shocked at her ingratitude; and she was severely reproved by the superior, for her want of human pity and Christian charity."

"I must confess," said Mr. Everard, "that if ever she becomes a candidate for canonization, the advocate of a certain black gentleman will have little difficulty in opposing her claims, and gaining his client's cause. But, to return to sister Mary—you can make the experiment, and write an invitation to your friend to inhabit my mansion, when no longer polluted by one of her countrymen; and to aid you in vanquishing her antipathy, you may inform her that I shall manage to leave the chateau, ere the carriage be forwarded to Fribourg,

to convey her hither, should she accede to your request."

"It is not antipathy, I am positive, my dear father, which sways her in her prejudices. Although still young and handsome, she has evidently suffered much; but no complaint ever passes her lips. From the hints of the lady abbess, we have been rather led to conclude that she strives to avoid the revival of painful recollections connected with her own country."

"At all events, Julia, I would be happy to learn her decision before I am summoned for departure, as my mind will be more at ease, should she, contrary to our expectations, comply with your solicitation."

As he said this, Mr. Everard proceeded to give such directions as were essential in the intended event of his leaving the chateau.

Two other days had fled, without any occurrence of interest, when, on the third, sister Mary's answer was received, and Julia was delighted to learn that she accepted her invitation, in promising to remain with her as a companion during the entire period of her father's absence; and that on his departure she would be ready to abandon the convent for the chateau.

Mr. Everard was equally gratified in ascertaining the protection acquired for his daughter, in the person of one towards whom his gratitude had been excited, by the advantages derived from her instructions, and the attentions she had conferred upon his child, while resident at St. Ursule's.

Their party was increased at dinner by the visit of monsieur De Rougemont, a French ecclesiastic, whom the revolution had rendered an exile from

his native land. Despoiled of the possessions which had once enabled him to maintain, with suitable splendour, the dignified station he then held in the church, and to devote large sums to the purposes of charity, he would have been reduced to the level of those who once shared his bounty, had not his valuable acquirements, his extensive learning, genuine piety, and amiable manners, enabled him to acquire the necessary means of support. The aid which Mr. Everard had repeatedly, and with the utmost delicacy, proffered him, had been constantly declined, with firmness and respect; but he did not hesitate, in refusing to become his pensioner, to participate in the pleasures of his social circle, or to partake of the hospitality of the chateau.

That the example of monsieur De Rougemont was not imitated by the mass of those whom the convulsions of their

their country had thrown upon foreign shores, must be conceded; but the number who, from feelings of innate delicacy, or of noble pride, preferred to conceal their distresses from the eye of day, and to bury, in secrecy and solitude, their privations and miseries, was infinitely greater than might be generally supposed, and those redeeming qualities for the vices of too many of their fellow-countrymen, were hid in retirement. The meanness or ingratitude of such as had abandoned a country where their crimes threatened to insure punishment, or of those who, under the pretext of unmerited misfortune, calculated upon the profitable credulity of strangers, was freely witnessed within the walls of towns and cities, and created a general prejudice against the emigrants. But it was amid the snows of Canada and Nova Scotia—in the mountains of Switzerland—or on the desert tracks of Russia, that such, whose more refined princi-

ples of honour forbade dependence—whose honest pride spurned at supplication, were too often to be found the relics of the noblest families of France; and it was in the wilderness and the forest that the loyal and the brave, after having sacrificed their interest to their duty, gleaned from the hard hand of thrifty nature the scanty maintenance she could there afford.

Monsieur De Rougemont had been induced to fix his residence near the chateau, from its vicinity to a land to which his heart was still fondly attached, and the sight of whose mountain frontier brought often solace to his wounded spirit.

The necessary services of his communion had first disposed Mr. Everard to seek the refugee in his humble dwelling; while the sacrament of confession, in affording to the venerable priest an intimate

intimate acquaintance with the character and misfortunes of his wealthier neighbour, had awakened in his behalf a fervent and sincere interest. The warm and friendly solicitations of the latter had the effect, in the course of time, of forcing monsieur De Rougemont to quit occasionally his retreat, and the amiable manners of the proprietor of the chateau, and of his lovely daughter, had for some years rendered him a frequent and desired visitant within its walls. His various accomplishments, talent, and information, enabled him, in some degree, to recompense the kind attentions of his host, in completing the education of Julia, and in rendering her mistress of many literary accomplishments, of which the convent of St. Ursule had not permitted her to profit. To that reciprocal esteem which was early engendered between the parties, had succeeded warm and disinterested friendship; and monsieur De Rougemont's experience of

the world enabled him to become frequently and beneficially the temporal adviser, as he was ever the spiritual director of his host.

Resigned to the inflictions by which he had been visited, in the violent overthrow of established system in the church and state of France, monsieur De Rougemont had preserved, in poverty and exile, that calm and forbearing temper which a faithful reliance on the promises of revelation cannot fail to inculcate. His sufferings had been of no ordinary character, yet they had been endured with firmness; and although the fearful privations he had undergone, in friends, family, property, and profession, had set the seal of melancholy on his countenance, his strength of mind had remained unaffected; he had the power of diverting its effects from his manners or conversation, and was no less estimable as a companion, than respectable

table as a minister. From an early period of his life, he had been officially attached to the family of his unfortunate sovereign, and had unrepiningly shared the injuries and afflictions showered on their heads, until the perpetration of that arch crime, in striking at the root of the most sacred institutions of a civilized people, rendered all further effort as unavailing to himself as to those for whom they had been hitherto zealously and fearlessly exerted. In the midst of discord and anarchy, his unoffending character, his mild deportment, and the purity of his life, had not wholly lost their effect; and he had been repeatedly invited, by conforming himself to the change his country had undergone, to preserve for his kindred no inconsiderable portion of his property; but he spurned the suggestion, and met his destiny without fear or indecision. It was not therefore surprising that he soon became endeared to the inhabitants

of

of the chateau, or that he regarded it as a spot whereon he might place his foot with confidence, after wandering long alone, neglected and abandoned by the world.

Mr. Everard confided to his friend his intention of quitting the chateau, and intreated of him to supply, as far as possible, his place, during his absence, towards Julia and the family.

The venerable ecclesiastic readily engaged to watch over her safety with paternal care, and to transact all such concerns as were without the pale of female management. As he was the confessor and officiating chaplain to the Ursulines, he had been long intimately acquainted with the character of sister Mary; and he highly approved the choice which had adopted her as the companion of Julia while her father was absent.

As

As their repast terminated, Mr. Everard was summoned from the room to receive letters, of which a stranger was the bearer; and as Julia heard it, her heart beat high with apprehension of its being the notice he expected to determine his departure, which was quickly confirmed by her witnessing the anxiety that sat upon his brow as he re-entered the room. For some time he was earnestly engaged in the perusal of the packet consigned to him, and so interested was he in its contents, that he seemed lost to all surrounding objects: their subject matter evidently affected him in the highest degree, with various and conflicting emotions; and the sensation of joy that lighted up his countenance at first, gave way to an expression of sorrow, that was again banished by involuntary indications of grief and horror. As he proceeded he would occasionally shudder, and with difficulty his trembling hands could retain possession

sion of the documents that so fearfully affected him. As he finished reading them, he uttered a profound and heart-felt sigh, while his face was clothed with the pallid hue of death, until suddenly seizing a goblet, he filled it to the brim, and strove by drinking it off to seek that restoration of his faculties which the intelligence he had received had clearly tended to subdue.

Monsieur De Rougemont remained throughout a calm, although not an uninterested spectator of the scene; and probably the confessional had rendered him so far master of his friend's history, as to prevent the astonishment which possessed Julia at the excess of feeling demonstrated by her father.

Having, in a great measure, regained his tranquillity, he turned towards her, and affectionately pressed her hand.—"I must not say that I am grieved, my love,

love, in the necessity I am under of leaving you, as I ardently trust that my temporary absence will be the means of increasing our future happiness; and a solemn and imperative duty forbids me to hesitate; but I am sorry to declare that my departure is required earlier than I had calculated, and that to-morrow morning I must bid adieu to Leaspach."

A faintness came over Julia at this intelligence, and it was long ere the violence of her sorrow yielded to the affectionate persuasions of her father, or to the consolatory arguments of the priest; but she became at length sufficiently calm to listen to the former.

"The carriage shall leave this instantly," he continued, "for Fribourg, and in the course of the morrow you may, I hope, expect the arrival of your friend, sister Mary. But let me intreat you, during the

the short period of my stay, to struggle with your grief; and be assured that the term of my absence shall be abridged to the utmost of my power, while I fervently pray that my return will open far fairer and brighter prospects for each of us during our future existence."

Her father then gave her instructions with regard to the preparations for his sudden departure; and after fondly pressing her to his heart, retired with monsieur De Rougemont to the library.

Julia hastened to execute his directions; the fulfilment of which had the happy effect of distracting her attention from a subject to which she could not revert without pain.

The whole family had risen before daylight the succeeding morning to attend the departure of Mr. Everard; and the idea of losing, even for a limited period,

period, one who possessed the respect and affections of those who surrounded him, had affected the domestics, with the reservation of one person, if his case might be properly deemed an exception. Whatever regret Fritz, the aged servant, might entertain, his sorrow was so strangely blended with opposite and contradictory feelings, and the transition of the conflicting emotions by which he was agitated imparted so extraordinary and burlesque a character to his words and actions, as almost to confirm an idea which his fellow-servants began to entertain, of his senses being materially affected. While occupied in the necessary preparations, his speech and gesture were so strangely at variance, that those who had known him the longest, might have felt justified in the conclusion the household in general had adopted.

Entering the hall between Julia and monsieur De Rougemont, Mr. Everard bade

bade a warm adieu to his friend, and bestowing his affectionate caresses and parting benediction on his weeping daughter, he entered the carriage, and was shortly out of sight.

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

Your colours you must wear, and wear them proudly,
Wear them before the bullet, and in blood too,
And all the world shall know we're virtue's servants.
Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, Act V. Sc. 5.

The Cadet.

Mr. Everard was descended from an ancient and noble family, which had been settled in the north of England since the period of the Norman conquest, and had continued, subsequent to the Reformation, strict adherents to the Roman creed. His father, lord Bridgenorth, had destined him, as the youngest of his three sons, to the profession of the church, and for that purpose had sent him at an early age to Rome, where he

he was received by the reigning pontiff with marked attention, and his ecclesiastical prospects bore the brightest character.

In the capital of the ancient world he had been introduced to the best society; and the preference that has been long displayed by the inhabitants of that celebrated city towards the natives of Great Britain, was still more marked to one whom they acknowledged as the scion of an ancient and illustrious race, professing the same faith as themselves, and intended for a minister of the same communion.

To the higher classes of that renowned and interesting metropolis, may be fairly yielded the palm of excellence, in all that regards the perfection of social intercourse; and if they be contaminated by a partial participation in the profligacy and licentiousness that characterize Italian

Italian communities in general, yet these evils extend not to the precincts of the papal court, within which are concentered the better graces of society, united to much moral worth, and all the learning and talent which should adorn the chief seat of the Roman church. To Henry Everard these advantages were freely laid open, and largely did he profit by them; while his religious principles, instead of becoming tinctured by a spirit of exclusion, that might injure their possessor in his future intercourse with those of different sentiments, were tempered by that liberality which is more largely exercised within the immediate circle of the pontiff's court, than at a distance from the seat of ecclesiastical power.

To those who have sought within the walls of Rome the exquisite indulgence of contemplating the reliques of her ancient glory, or the splendid productions of

of modern genius, and have journeyed from those shores where freedom now rules, to survey the venerable site on which she once held sway, the reception afforded has long been as honourable to themselves, as it has provoked feelings of envy in other and less favoured nations. The predilection of the Romans in favour of a people decidedly distinct in language, manners, customs, and faith, has not arisen from caprice, but been founded on motives which well justify the distinction they confer. In other countries, the vices that deform the British character are seen largely amalgamated with the virtues that adorn it, and the former become more prominent beneath the envious scrutiny of foreign prejudice: Rome, on the contrary, is the exclusive resort of those fitted by birth, station, and education, to do honour to the country they represent; and as it offers no allurements to the enterprise of trade, no gratification to frivolity,

lity, or unmeaning curiosity, and no public pleasures, its attractions can only be appreciated by those whose taste has been refined by education, and whose rank and fortune permit the indulgence of their desires. That portion of British society congregated within its walls, is therefore of the most select and respectable character; and the conduct and manners of its individuals are calculated to produce an impression, which it were to be wished was not confined to the capital of the Christian world.

Notwithstanding the brilliant prospect held out to him in his career, a visit to his paternal mansion, at the age of eighteen, soon obliterated from Henry's remembrance "the fair fields of Italy," and produced a change in his ideas little consonant to the views of his family. In defiance of the solemn injunctions and severest menaces of his father, and the supplications and entreaties of his mother, he determin-

ed to abandon the profession to which he had been devoted; and with enthusiasm suited to the natural ardour of his temper, he rejected the gown for the sword, and asserted his irresistible impulse for the career of arms. In vain were the united efforts of his family directed to divert him from his project; but threat and persuasion were equally unavailing against the superior enticement of a soldier's life.

A father's severest denunciations attended his entrance into the army; and the spirit of determined adherence to his purpose, which characterized the parent, having been in no inconsiderable degree inherited by the son, Henry Everard found himself, at an early age, severed from all intercourse with his family, and interdicted his paternal home. A small income, derived from the generosity of a deceased uncle, enabled him to gratify his inclinations; and he became

came a stranger to those who bore his name, save in the occasional and clandestine letters of his mother, during the very few years she survived his departure from his paternal roof. His brothers having yielded, without hesitation, implicit obedience to his father's orders, to abstain from all communication with the rebellious cadet, he experienced, on his mother's decease, the privation of the only friend he was permitted to love, or who professed interest in his fate.

The regiment in which Henry Everard had entered, was, shortly after he entered the army, ordered upon foreign service; and on the distant and barren shores of Nova Scotia, he first learned the nature of the privations to which the members of that profession are subjected. The severe and protracted winters of an Acadian climate were rendered supportable, by the well-known hospi-

tality of the inhabitants; but when ordered to some distant outpost, where he remained for months, secluded from social intercourse, he had leisure to contrast the lengthened plains of snow around him, which lay untrodden, save by the half-famished bear, with the fertile fields and smiling skies of Italy; and the hard and homely fare allotted him, with that luxury he had renounced in the baronial mansion of his fathers. The return to head-quarters, by permitting him to share the unrestrained hospitality and the pleasures of polished society, soon dispelled the remembrance of his momentary sufferings, and dissipated his half-formed regrets.

He had thus passed three years of his life on the iron-bound coast of Nova Scotia, when he became acquainted with the family of a Mr. Murray, the attachment of whose immediate ancestor to the cause of the Pretender had obliged him

him to abandon his native shores, and to seek shelter and security amid the woods of America. Jane, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Murray, early attracted the admiration and attentions of our young soldier; and the many opportunities afforded by the lengthened severity of a winter, tempered by all the entertainment society can offer, soon engendered a passion in his breast, to the progress of which prudence could oppose no bulwark. The excellent qualities of Miss Murray's mind yielded not to the exquisite beauty of her person; and so soon as Henry ascertained that his love was met by sincere and disinterested affection on her part, he demanded her hand in marriage, and, with her parents' consent, rendered her the partner of his fate and fortunes. The honeymoon fled swiftly on the wings of delight, and their days were fraught with bliss, which their dispositions were calculated to appreciate, and

their ages to prolong. If the luxuries abounding in his native land, or the beauties appertaining to milder and more favoured climates, were denied them, yet the bleak and rugged shore they trod was not wholly devoid of gratifications; and however spare Nature might be in the distribution of her favours, yet social mirth and hospitable entertainment supplied the want, and curtailed the horrors of the wintry season. When its snows had settled on the earth, and the diminished day scarcely allowed time for the performance of necessary occupation, the hours of exercise and pleasure were transferred to the evening, when the resplendent and whitened surface of the land gave to the night a noontide brilliancy, and the vivid coruscations of the aurora borealis playing around the vault of heaven, reflected their crimson hues upon the extensive snow, and rendered every object distinct and beautiful. As soon as the summer

summer reappeared—a summer which arrives in that climate without the intervention of spring—the instantaneous change operated on the face of nature, by the active progress of vegetation, produced a keener relish for its beauties, from the suddenness of the transition. At such a time, Henry and his wife would often contemplate, by the soft and lengthened twilight, the imposing scenery that surrounded them, and which, in its gigantic proportions, and solemn effect, is unrivalled in those countries to which universal admiration has been given. Seated on a rock that stood on the borders of a dark and boundless forest, whose domain extends to the verge of the ocean, they would listen to the rude, but not inharmonious chaunt of the native Indians, as, by the innumerable lights floating on the surface of the waters, and seated in their slender and graceful canoes of bark, they awaited with eager eye the approach of the finny

inhabitants of the deep, which was distinctly announced by the quick plunge of the well-directed harpoon, that seldom failed to secure its prey. Frequently they would extend their steps to the humble wigwam placed near the shore, and sheltered by lofty pines, and observe its inhabitants employed in adorning the pliant bark with the coloured quills of the porcupine, with an elegance of design that might be little expected from untutored taste. With sorrow he beheld a race, which, although rude and uncultivated, could boast of virtues deficient amongst more enlightened people, become the sacrifice to the designed introduction of the most destructive of foreign luxuries, and their numbers gradually diminish beneath the fatal effects of inebriety, and the uncontrolled use of liquors, administered by mercenary hands. Hospitable and generous, actuated by a feeling of loyalty approaching to fanaticism, to the

the sovereign whose sway they acknowledge, and to whom the fondest designation has ever been applied, it may be, when too late, a subject of regret, that a nation, calculated for arms and enterprize, and ready to prove an unexpensive and efficient bulwark to foreign invasion, should have become thus ingloriously extinct.

But few months had witnessed the unalloyed happiness of Henry and his wife, ere orders were received for the return of his regiment to Europe; and as early as the ice permitted the embarkation of the troops, they took leave of their friends, and left the American shores for a happier and more favoured land.

The voyage was long and boisterous, and those who have endured the misery of a passage of many weeks in a transport, can alone estimate the sufferings

and privations which Mrs. Everard had to undergo; but youth, health, and love, can temper difficulties, and she bore her lot with patience and courage.

In again treading his native soil, the ardent feelings of attachment to the country of his birth, which occupied the heart of Henry, were heightened by the rapture of his young and lovely wife, at witnessing the unrivalled beauty of the rich and fertile country where they disembarked, and the luxurious verdure that the approach of summer presents on that favoured spot.

Landing at Plymouth, they procured comfortable apartments; and the contrast displayed between the gay and smiling appearance of the land they inhabited, and the barren and rocky shore of Nova Scotia—the genial warmth of a Devonshire spring, and the stormy and boisterous Atlantic—the intercourse of friendly

friendly and polished society, and the miserable and crowded soldiery on board the transport—was strongly felt by Mrs. Everard, who appreciated more justly her actual comforts, in comparing them with the painful situation from which she had been suddenly relieved. The cheerful and amiable disposition of the youthful pair—their noble origin—their pleasing and graceful manners—their mutual tenderness and affection, and even their limited resources, were circumstances tending to excite the sympathy and attentions of those amid whom they were placed, and the most cordial proofs of warm and generous interest were showered upon them. The hours passed swiftly, not only undisturbed by care, sorrow, or discontent, but marked with a vivid joy; and the state pictured by imagination as the romance of life, assumed a reality which no cloud threatened to shroud or to obscure.

The promise afforded by Mrs. Everard of soon bestowing on him the title of father, conferred, if it were possible, additional force to his love; and possessed of the means of satisfying their moderate desires, with their hopes united in each other, they shared a happiness to which few are destined, and with which most are imperfectly or transiently acquainted. The birth of a daughter, to whom was given the name of Julia, seemed a fresh pledge of the endurance of their blessings; and the offspring of the purest affection was regarded by her enraptured parents as the richest gift that Heaven in its bounty could bestow.

About this period Henry was shocked to learn, through the channel of the public journals, the death of his father, lord Bridgenorth, who was succeeded by his eldest son in his title and estate. The decease of his lordship operated no change in the circumstances or prospects of Henry,

Henry, who, in consequence of his brother having neglected to inform him of the event, delegated to a distant relative, resident near his family seat, the office of ascertaining the ultimate dispositions of his late parent; and from whom he learned, with feelings of sorrow, that the obduracy which had distinguished him through life had remained inflexible to its close, and that his name had not even been mentioned in his father's will. The moderate provision he had hitherto enjoyed was to be now considered as the only means of future support which he would be enabled to afford to the objects of his affection, in the event of his death, and as the extent of his daughter's expectations. Urged by the warm feelings of his heart, he, however, did not hesitate to address a letter to his brother, of condolence on their mutual loss, and congratulation on his accession to the title; but weeks and months passed without reply, and the separation

so long existing between his family and himself seemed absolutely confirmed.

Amongst the friends whose kindness and attentions softened the pain he experienced at the treatment of those to whom he was so nearly allied, was one who was distantly connected with his family, and who, although he had for many years relinquished all correspondence with its members, on hearing the name of Everard, had introduced himself to Henry, and had invited him to his country seat, in the neighbourhood of Plymouth.

In Mr. and Mrs. Vavasour, Henry and his wife found dispositions congenial to their own, and the amiable characters of their hosts attracted their esteem and respect. Resident wholly in the country — possessors of an extensive and charming domain, their acquaintance was as eagerly sought as it was highly valued

valued when attained. While they possessed the esteem of those of their own rank, their generosity, charity, and condescension, during a long life, had secured them the gratitude and affection of all in humbler station. Their family consisted of an only son, who was then pursuing his avocations as a barrister in London, but whom the social obligations of the approaching Christmas were expected shortly to summon home.

It was at this period that Henry had received into his family a woman of the name of Edwards, whose deportment, manners, and education, would have indicated her intended for a higher sphere, although she was wholly silent in regard to her connexions. She was between thirty and forty years of age, but her features would have induced the supposition of her being considerably younger, and they yet retained no trifling portion of that beauty which in earlier life she had

had evidently possessed. The interest and affection she displayed towards their child, her regularity in domestic management, and her experience in the conduct of a family, rendered her an important acquisition to Mrs. Everard, who was yet a novice in the mysteries of the *menage;* and she soon engrossed the confidence of her employers. If she possessed any peculiarity, it was that of shunning with peculiar care the eye of the world; but as it was far from being an objectionable quality in a domestic, it was rather a subject of congratulation than displeasure to her mistress. She had been taken into the family under the urgent circumstances attending their arrival; and whatever measures caution and prudence might have required in the first instance, were rendered wholly unnecessary after some time, by the continued and undeviating propriety of her conduct.

Leaving

Leaving Mrs. Edwards in the superintendence of their apartments, Henry and his wife proceeded to the seat of Mr. Vavasour, whither they had been invited to pass the gay and jocund season of Christmas; and they were received and welcomed by their excellent hosts with every mark of affection and pleasure. On the second morning of their visit, Henry descended to the breakfast-room before the family had assembled, and found it occupied by a stranger, whose resemblance to his friends left him no doubt of his being their son; and his opinion was quickly confirmed by the self-introduction of his companion, in terms expressing the anxiety he had of becoming acquainted with his parents' visitors, whom they had often mentioned to him in their letters, and the pleasure he enjoyed, by at length being enabled to gratify the desire they had excited. Henry gratefully acknowledged his obligations to Mr. and Mrs. Vavasour,

vasour, and the happiness he felt in completing his knowledge of a family he had so much reason to esteem; and the conversation then reverted to general topics, until the entrance of the parents.

The many inquiries, consequent upon the long period of separation between the parties, left a sufficient opportunity to Henry, to observe, at leisure, his new acquaintance. His figure was tall and spare, his face, dark and oval, with more of the Italian cast than is generally perceived in England; but they might be considered handsome; and his air and address bespoke a knowledge of the world, and liberal intercourse with the best society. The impression he was calculated to produce on first acquaintance, was decidedly in his favour; but he seemed qualified to shine rather in general than particular society. He appeared too much possessed by the apathy

apathy of worldly prudence: and, notwithstanding his expressions were strictly suited to every circumstance, and perfectly fitted to each variety of occasion, there was a peculiar absence of those honest and warmer feelings which a family meeting, after long absence, and the happy recollections allied to a season of social festivity, might have been naturally expected to create. On the most ordinary and trivial topics, there seemed to enter too much mental calculation: and a frigidity of manner, indicative of insincerity, accompanied by an apparent effort to subdue the kindlier emotions as they arose, as if unsuited to the character he had assumed, were evident; and notwithstanding his words were rigidly correct in their applications, his thoughts might be deemed wholly unidentified with the passing scene. With every other external advantage, and with the studied adaptation of manner to events, he could not

not conceal a sinister and undefined expression of look, which he might not resist, but of which he was conscious—and often as he excited admiration by his conversation, the effect would be suddenly arrested or defeated by his glance, which would, in its turn too, often cower to the very regard that met and strove to shun its encounter.

When the party had separated, Henry took up a newspaper, in which a paragraph presented itself to his notice, announcing that his brother, lord Bridgenorth, lay dangerously ill, at his residence in town. His immediate impulse was, to address the invalid in an affectionate letter; but the remembrance of the unmerited reserve and neglect evinced towards himself, and which might be readily abandoned by their author (were he desirous of a renewal of friendly intercourse), restrained the execution of his intentions. He was, however,

however, much affected at the intelligence, as neither absence nor ill treatment could subdue within him his better feelings towards his home and family.

The Christmas festivities were conducted under the roof of Mr. Vavasour upon a scale suited to his fortune, and with the genuine hospitality that distinguishes the landed proprietors of England, in being liberally and unreservedly extended to the humblest of their dependents. Much as their observances may be cherished and preserved by those who, exiled from their native land, strive to revive the customs of their forefathers, they are generally attended by the melancholy reminiscence of the objects from which those who renew them have been torn. It was with such sentiments, and rather as the feast of tears than that of gladness, the season had presented itself, hitherto,

hitherto, to Mrs. Everard, in the dwelling of her father, when "their harp was hanged up by the waters," and "they could not sing the song in a strange land." The contrast of the scene she witnessed afforded her more than ordinary interest and pleasure, and she gave way to its influence with the most vivid emotions.

The many parties to which they were conducted by the Vavasours occupied the remaining period of their stay; and after a fortnight devoted to pleasure and amusement, Henry and his wife felt no regret in returning to their modest and quiet home.

On all occasions, Mr. Marmaduke Vavasour had shewn them every attention; but while his manners were regulated by politeness and good breeding, there was ever something repulsive to that familiarity and intimacy, which the similarity

similarity of age in Henry and himself might have been expected to produce. Although not beloved, he was popular, mingling only with general society; and where his interference would neither compromise his character or fortune, he found himself ever "strongest on the stronger side;" and although endowed with those superficial qualities which pass current in the world, he was devoid of feeling, save where that paramount object was affected, which swallowed up all other considerations—in one word, self.

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

Well, I doubt not to die a fair death for all this, if I 'scape hanging.

King Henry IV. Act iv. *Scene* 2.

The Housekeeper.

It was in the memorable and auspicious year of the accession of his majesty, king George the Third, to the throne, that one of those handmaids of nature, denominated a midwife, or known by the more honourable, but not less exclusive and equivocal Gallic appellation of a "*sage femme*," introduced to a world the first-born of an amiable and interesting pair, who, after years of anxious expectation, thus beheld their desires fulfilled, and their half-extinguished hopes

hopes at once perfected. The female infant of Mr. John Waters, and Sarah his wife, in due time solemnly received the appellation of England's virgin queen, which was subsequently degraded to the more concise and familiar epithet of "Bet," by the public in general, and her affectionate parents in particular. The annals of her earlier years are unmarked by events deserving general attention; but as, at a more mature age, she becomes connected with our history, it may be proper to observe, that however celebrated the spot of her birth has become by a radical opposition to the Chesterfield code of manners, or a persevering and equal hostility to the Johnsonian rules of expression, as to the tenets of that great moralist, the juvenile Bet outshone all her contemporaries in her disregard of such unwelcome principles; and the youthful heiress of the house of Waters was early known as the most consummate scapegrace that

our modern Alsatia, Wapping, could produce.

Her respectable sire laid claim to a long line of ancestry, who, if they were not honourably distinguished, might be termed exalted, by the manner of their deaths; but no genealogical considerations hindered their descendants stooping to the pursuit of commerce, in which, however, his condescension did not encounter correspondent success. With that modesty inherent in noble minds, he concealed, as far as possible, his transactions from public regard; and so delicate was he in this particular, that his negociations were conducted with the utmost privacy, the night, rather than the day, being selected for the purpose; while a retired back room, closed doors, and a careful guard, announced his anxiety to avoid eclat, and shun attention. His modesty would, however, sometimes prove (as in the case of the pigmy

pigmy giant-killer) but a "flambeau to his merit," attracting envious observation to his speculations, to the evident pain of John, and the too frequent injury of his concerns. The indelicate interference of certain officers of the crown in his affairs, and their impertinent curiosity as to the nature of his dealings, with the undignified jealousy evinced by government of his progress in trade, had operated forcibly on a sensitive mind; and when the ill-concealed hatred of his advancement had at length become evident, by the repeated seizure of his effects, on the frivolous pretext that they were the property of his majesty, and by the violation of his personal liberty, his temper became soured, and the fabric of his loyalty wavered to its fall, as he gradually became as violent a radical as our own later times can produce.

When not kept secluded within four

walls from public view, by the machinations of his enemies, he would, in his declamations against ministerial corruption, not even spare royalty itself, upon occasions of public meetings; but his wrath was peculiarly directed against his especial persecutors — the lords of the admiralty, who, with more energy than elegance of expression, he constantly designated as a "nest of wipers." To his intelligent mind, the defects in the constitution of his country became readily apparent, especially as in his own case he deemed them prominently evinced; and he would often state as the cause of his legitimate indignation, that when the politeness of the admiralty solicitor urged him to appear before certain venerable gentlemen, who were to decide on a difference of opinion between John and the attorney-general, although the law had designated the judges as advocates for the prisoner, yet, as such, neither their age, rank, learning,

ing, or character, could save him, their constitutional *protegé*, from punishment—" And if that ere ben't corruption," exclaimed John, " I would like to know what is; 'tis a shame and a sin, and all the work of that nest of wipers to get me into quod."

The fact was, that the dealings of our hero were comprised in the purchase of certain decayed and unserviceable articles marked with the broad arrow; and his taste for old brass and copper rivalled that of certain noble antiquarians for the same articles, with the distinction of the latter being of more ancient date, of equally modern production, and possibly less intrinsic value. In fine, John was so repeatedly under the necessity of detailing the history of his metallic acquisitions, which was generally involved in as much obscurity as others of higher price, that although some of his brazen traffic might be traced to his compa-

nions, he was often consigned to one Fleet for his interference with the appurtenances of the other.

In Mrs. Sarah Waters, the mother of our heroine, John had attained a companion suitable to his disposition, in despising that attention to dress and ornament which occupies so much the time of her fairer countrywomen, as she could vie with a Hottentot in contempt of costume; while her distaste for ablution approached to absolute hydrophobia. She had, however, in common with those of higher rank, received from nature the gift of nerves, and a consequent defection in their strength, which she imputed to the honeymoon, when John, in illustrating argument by action, in his definition of the duties of a wife, had rendered his amiable consort an invalid for the space of some weeks. When the fit came on, the only remedy was the internal application of geneva, during

during the operation of which she was too often disposed to recall to her husband's mind the origin of the malady, in deploring the necessity of the antidote; but John, in denying the fact *ab initio*, as regularly concluded by a repetition of the very act which he would at the same time insist he was incapable of committing.

In the course of time, little Bet was introduced to the day-school of Mrs. Sampler, at the sacrifice of sixpence a-week from the revenue of the merchant; and in the course of eighteen months, by the help of natural abilities, aided in their developement by the cuffs of her schoolmistress, and the kicks and oaths of John, she was enabled to read the Psalter, and acquired the essential accomplishments of hemming and stitching. The feelings of the father were so much gratified by his daughter having surpassed himself in erudition, and

her mother in the exercise of the needle, that with no ordinary ambition he resolved that her precocious talents should have a wider field for their display; and little Bet, under the more genteel appellation of Miss Waters, was translated from the normal seminary to "an academy for young ladies," which was patronized by the lady of the deputy of the ward, and where Mrs. Alderman Fish's eldest daughter had actually been placed some years before.

Here she was rendered mistress of writing and arithmetic, and had even braved several of the "ologies," when a domestic misfortune arrested her literary career. In addition to her "narvousness," Mrs. Sarah had acquired a dropsical affection, which nothing could mitigate or relieve, but the redoublement in quantity of her usual prescription; and with so much Christian patience and undeviating fortitude did she adhere

here to its application, that the disorder, or its remedy, left Miss Waters motherless, and John inconsolable.

Summoned, at the age of fifteen, to fulfil the high duties of domestic management, her sire viewed with delight the superintendance of his accomplished daughter, and with a father's pride heard the praises generally lavished on her beauty. On her his hopes reposed for solace in the decline of life: but it is not at this time of day necessary to establish the fallacy of human anticipations, even when they emanate from the wisest and most prudent of the species. It will not therefore essentially derogate from the sagacity which John imputed to himself, if a "killing frost" nipped at its birth the bud of promise. Two years after the departure of Mrs. Sarah from this world of want and wo, dropsy, nerves, and geneva, her daughter eloped from the paternal roof with

the serjeant of a marching regiment, taking (probably by mistake) so much of the pecuniary produce of her father's trade as was not effectually secured.

Under the first impulse of parental resentment, John determined to have recourse to the laws of his country, the efficacy of which he had so frequently experienced in his own person, for the restitution, not of his daughter, but his money; but as Betty was mistress of certain important secrets relating to the administration of his concerns, and as he had sufficient proof that the vindictive spirit of his daughter was not to be lightly excited, upon calm reflection he, with an oath, gave her to the devil, and permitted her to follow her inclinations, unmolested by his advice, interference, or remonstrance.

In the bustle of a camp, Betty soon acquired a knowledge of the world; and by

by the effects of a pleasing person, and no inconsiderable share of address, she so far insinuated herself into the good graces of the officers of the regiment, that she obtained nearly the entire monopoly of such concerns as a female only could perform; and her fortunes flourished in the exact proportion that the love and politeness of serjeant Edwards, her consort, declined. In fact, her once loved Romeo had long ceased to address his Juliet, but in terms to which her ears from childhood had been accustomed in her parental vocabulary; but she received his observations with equal indifference and contempt, unless aroused to answer in the same style, fearless of the consequences, as the influence she had acquired over his superiors prevented his having recourse to the dernier resort.

Ten years had passed in the profitable irregularities of a soldier's life, when

Betty, who had assumed the matronly appellation of Mrs. Edwards, found herself the possessor of a sufficient sum to enable her to establish a milliner's shop in the town where the regiment was then stationed, in the north of England, and which was in the immediate vicinity of lord Bridgenorth's estate. There, in the course of time, she succeeded in attracting the notice of John Everard, his lordship's eldest son, whose assiduous attentions soon became subject of general observation, and of conversation unfavourable to our heroine's reputation.

An event occurred, which however soon changed the aspect of affairs, in the regiment being ordered to the West Indies, when the serjeant contrived, not only to leave his *soi-disant* rib to bewail his personal loss, but, in retributory justice for the filial fraud committed on old John, effected his retreat with all her

her cash, and every article of a portable nature which she possessed.

John Everard being at the time on the Continent, our fair milliner declared herself insolvent, after in vain using every effort to maintain her credit. In her struggle to avoid the disaster which menaced her, and in the fear of becoming the inmate of a prison, she was induced, as it was reported subsequently, to raise money by forging a signature to the acceptance of a bill of exchange, by which she obtained a considerable sum; but the pursuit of her creditors was unremitted, and to avoid the extremities to which they seemed disposed to proceed, and the consequences attending the discovery of the fraud, as the bill fell due, she suddenly and unceremoniously decamped, leaving the relics of her stock in trade at the mercy of those whom she had so successfully deluded.

Recurring

Recurring to the metropolis, she lived for some months on the scanty funds she had preserved, until their entire exhaustion threw her again upon the mercy of the world. From this state of want she was relieved by John Everard's return from the Continent, when her appeal to him was not only effectual, but his former passion so far revived, that she became the mistress of his house until his father's death. The admiration of the successor to the title had, however, gradually abated ere that event had taken place, until disgust had wholly superseded affection; but such was the influence she had acquired over him, that he dared not break the ignominious chains by which he was fettered. Accident, however, tended to effect what the force of will refused; for such was the extravagance of our heroine, that, not content with the liberal provision she extorted from her keeper, she had recourse to family jewels of considerable value,

value, which, on the old peer's decease, were consigned to his son's possession. Judicial measures were resorted to to discover the author of the fraud; and with such publicity was it affixed upon Mrs. Edwards, that her protector found little difficulty in launching her for the third time in search of adventure, with a twenty-pound bank note in her pocket, and hatred and the desire of vengeance in her heart towards all who bore the name of Everard.

Thrown upon the world, and abandoned by all, Mrs. Edwards thought of recurring to old John; and for the purpose of revisiting the home she had deserted, she sought a female relation, named Davis, who had taken the place of the faithless Bet in the merchant's heart; but the representations of the spirit by which he was still actuated towards her, induced her, for the time, to abandon the idea. Hope of assistance was

was however revived, by learning from the newspapers the return of the serjeant's regiment from the West Indies, about the period of Henry's arrival from Nova Scotia; and she proceeded without delay to Plymouth, where it had disembarked; but her disappointment was at its height, in ascertaining that the object of her search had been drafted into another corps, stationed at Jamaica. Pennyless and unfriended, she offered her services to Henry and his wife on their landing; and as the occasion was urgent, she was received into their service; and the art by which she regulated her conduct was soon sufficient to lull prudence, on their part, asleep, and to establish her effectually in her post.

On his return home from the seat of the Vavasours, Henry found a letter awaiting him, from general Montrose, with whom he had served in America, and

and who had constantly evinced the warmest interest in his fate, offering him a situation on the staff of the army, connected with the general's employment in London, where he informed him he would be permitted to take up his residence, should he accept of the proposal. The idea of visiting the capital, under such advantageous circumstances, afforded them both delight; and as the letter had been some days delivered, Henry resolved to answer it in person, and without delay. Communicating his intention to his friends, the Vavasours, they entreated him to avail himself of the offers of assistance made by their son, in the event of his visiting London. Returning to his wife, he made his preparations for the journey, proposing to be absent but a few days, to complete the arrangements necessary for the reception of his family in that city.

Seated in the mail coach, he had time to

to calculate the benefits likely to attend his appointment, as his two fellow-passengers, whose figures were not discernible from obscurity, preserved that decorous taciturnity and reserve which distinguish the first hours of a journey in a public conveyance in England. One was a female, of whose corpulency Henry had rather disagreeable proof, in the limited space her extensive form permitted him to occupy, while her companion seemed a youth. They gave, however, but partial evidence of the liveliness of their respective faculties, until the coach stopped, for the purpose of allowing the passengers opportunity to sup, when the apathy of his associates yielded as to an electric shock, and their wits and appetites awakened simultaneously. Darting from the vehicle, the youth disappeared with the rapidity of lightning, to commence the business of refection; but the rotundity of the female denied her an equally sudden abandonment of her

her station; and she was obliged to have recourse to Henry's aid in relieving the vehicle of her weight.

"Lord love us!—quite ashamed of the trouble, sir," she said, in puffing out her acknowledgment as she descended from the coach, with less velocity than appertained to her specific gravity; "that ungrateful varlet, my nevvy, has no more heart in him than Blackfriar's bridge—leaving me in the lurch in this here manner—him as I has brought up, and clothed, and fed, at my own cost and charges, and no small feeding neither, sir, I assure you—as you may see there, for he is at it already, with no more feeling for his old aunt than a Turk for a Mohammittin.—Arn't you ashamed of yourself, you little Jew smouchy you? I might have waited till morning to get out of the vehicle for you—while there you sits, stuffing and guzzling, like a turkey-cock."

The

The nephew, a Jewish sly-looking lad, seemed little affected by the appeal, as he did not notice the female's harangue until he had emptied the dish placed before him, with more expedition than grace.—"Thought you might like a snooze or so, aunty, and didn't like to disturb your dreams," he replied; "besides, ten minutes only for supper's no joke. Up to snuff, and a pinch above it—always take care of number one.—Thank you, sir, for a leg of that ere turkey," he said, addressing himself to Henry; "but, oh Lord, sir!—no ham, if you please: that ere is no joke."

"Then I will, sir, if you has no objection," said the aunt. "Nat's of the Jewish pisswasion, sir, and mustn't touch pork and oysters, and such thingumbobs. His mother was a regular bred Christian, howsomever, sir; and she and old Nat used to fight so about a bit of bacon, that I often told 'em they'd never get the flitch, sir."

"There

"There you go!" rejoined the nephew: "I wish as how you would mind your eatables, aunty, and not be telling my story to all the world."

Henry, who was something of the Israelite's opinion, was not sorry to hear the summons to re-enter the coach, although the aunt and nephew loudly complained of the short period allowed for their meal. The appeal of Jehu for the customary donation on leaving them, announced by stroking down the black and shining *chevalure*, having been answered, they took their seats, after various difficulties in introducing the ponderous form of the old lady had been surmounted.

As soon as the coach had started, the nephew, rubbing his hands, exclaimed —"Gave coachee the go-by nicely— tipt him one of Moses Levi's dabs: did the flat clean."

"Penny

"Penny wise, pound foolish, I guess," answered the aunt; "and you'll be lucky, Nat, if Jack Ketch ben't too hard for you yet."

"Lord, aunty, one would think as how butter wouldn't melt in your mouth, and as if you couldn't be after a hoax yourself, or hadn't come all the way to Plymouth for nothing!—Well, how Jack Waters's daughter took it in! what a ninny, ha!"

"Why, arter all," rejoined the aunt, "Bet Waters as was—mistriss Edwards as is (as she calls herself—but that's neither here nor there), arn't a bit worse off. Didn't she shove off with a land lobster, and leave old Jack in the lurch? What could she expect for her undutifulness?—while, for my part, I has laid out many a good shilling on the niggerly old curmudgeon, who hadn't the grace to leave me a stiver, or a brass farthing, but gives it all away clean to that ere perstitute. But I was a bit sharper than he

he guessed, and I think I has put her on a wrong scent, ha, Nat!"

"Don't be sure of your chickens before they're hatched, aunty Thomas; for Bet Waters, or missuss Edwards, which you like, is slyerer than you think mayhap. I arn't quite so sure she gulped down that ere story, of her dad's dying in quod. All's well as ends well, says I."

Mr. Everard, equally disgusted with the style and sentiments of this conversation, felt careful not to disturb a discourse in which he commenced to take an interest, by evincing attention; and he therefore pretended sleep, to avoid being addressed, or interrupting the discourse.

"Don't be afeard, Nat," replied the aunt; "Bet knows when she's well off; and you know as how I has two strings to my bow; and if she wants to make a rumpus about it, I defies her after all. Why,

Why, isn't there that ere bill of old Owen's I knows of?—and wasn't she turned away by that lord Thingamegig for stealing? Let her kick up a dust if she dares: but there's no fear; she was as mild as mother's milk, and quite pleased to see us: then it was wastly luckly we should come just in the nick as her master and missuss were away."

"Every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost—that ere's my maxum," said Nat, as he disposed himself to sleep. "But she's an old hand, and——" Here an excessive yawn announced, most courteously, that his share in the dialogue might be considered as terminated; but the aunt, otherwise inclined, continued in a monologue—"Well, some folks are born with a silver spoon in the mouth, and some with a wooden ladle. Here has I been, a painstaking body, and yet I has had many a rub and a snub in the world, while that ere Bet Waters, with all her vagaries, keeps her

her head above water; and there she's in a sitivation which makes one's mouth water, and carries it off with an air as if she hadn't been the rantipole concubine of a serjeant, and the cast-off trull of a lord. It's none of my business, but if Bet don't make them sorrow the day she crossed their threshold, black is the white of my eye, says I!" and with this elegant apostrophe she followed the example of her nephew.

Although Mr. Everard could scarcely believe that the conversation he had overheard referred to his housekeeper, yet there were some startling points of similarity, which, for the moment, shook his confidence. When, however, he reflected on the vulgar epithets applied to the subject of his companion's discourse, and the character in which she had been represented, he dismissed the doubt that for an instant he had entertained.

As the morning broke, they were aroused by the stoppage of the mail at a village, and the renewed petition of another driver for his compliment, which was complied with, the Jew giving his aunt a wink as he presented his tribute; but, to his mortification, he had now calculated without his host, for Jehu seemed prepared for the exploit, as he cast a glance of shrewd suspicion on the fictitious coin, and without hesitation addressed the unfortunate donor, with less of gratitude than anger.

"Oh ho! you are at it again, mister Moses, are you? I'll just trouble you to step into this here public house. No harm, young Israel, I assure you," as the Jew hesitated; "you must only stand search a bit or so, if you please. Come along—we can't stop, my hopeful Judah; if you don't, blow my buttons but I'll trundle you out, by cuff and collar!"

With

With his hand in his pocket, as intending to dispose of something important to his safety, Nat sat pale, trembling, and in an agony of fear; while his aunt, better able to address the incensed driver, and aware of the peril in which her hopeful relation was placed, supplicated the coachman to accept a pound note in lieu of the sixpence.

"Why, ma'am, as you're a lady, and I don't want to hurt little Benjamin, double the Abraham, and I'll be content —although it's not the first Aaron has passed this night; and I rather guess he has a travelling stock for coachees and guards. Come, ma'am, I'm in a hurry."

The aunt finding the coachman determined, hastily slipped two notes into his hand.

"Thankee, ma'am. Now, Mordecai, if you please, I must have t'other bits

you have there for the Jarvies. Come, be quick, Manassah, my cock!"

Nathan, aware with whom he had to deal, without hesitation consigned to him several false pieces of money, which his accuser received with excessive delight.

"Good-bye, Moses; shall be glad to drive your honour another time. Shan't forget a sixpenn'orth of oranges when I pass the Bank. Pleasant journey, Habbakuk.—Shove off there, Jack."

The mail proceeded; and the aunt railed with the utmost fury at her nephew—not for the attempt at fraud, but its unsuccessful issue; and Mr. Everard could not refrain offering advice, to one whose dishonesty, at that early period of life, seemed to portend its duration as limited.

This

This " cat-as-stuffy," as the old lady termed it, furnished matter for observation during the remainder of the journey; and so favourable was the impression made by Mr. Everard's counsel to her nephew, that when they quitted the coach, she proffered a visitation in a general style to tea, at the same time presenting her card of address, which indicated—" Mary Thomas, Pawnbroker, Wych-street, Strand. Private door in the alley."

CHAPTER IV.

There had used to be a livelihood to be picked up in this country, both for the honest and dishonest.

West Indian, Act II. Scene 3.

London.

THE morning sun shone brightly on the metropolis, as Henry entered it, and shewed the lofty dome of its cathedral towering in majesty over the seat of liberty, of science, and of art.

Leaving the inn, he pursued his way on foot towards the Temple, until he paused to contemplate the mighty structure, worthy of the great city it adorns, as well as the restricted area permitted him to comprehend the details of that stupen-

stupendous edifice. Long familiar with the wonders displayed in the construction and adornment of St. Peter's, he could not refrain from admiration of her less gorgeous rival; and in defiance of the world's creed, at the risk of being marked as a singular instance of bad taste, he did not hesitate to give the preference to the magnificent pile he viewed, as far as regarded its imposing effect. The very defects, generally enumerated against it, operated, in his opinion, in favour of the building; the limited space within which it may be examined, gave to it a swelling and more ponderous character; while the dark hue with which it was clothed conferred that solemn appearance which corresponded with its enormous proportions, and the holy purposes to which it was dedicated. Without presuming to compare the rival cathedrals in their general appurtenances, nor the splendid exterior and internal appendages of St. Pe-

ter's with the solitary and naked grandeur of St. Paul's, he felt that the superb area, the lengthened and elegant colonnade, the fountains, and obelisks, with the neighbouring and lofty walls of the Vatican, much as they delighted the view, deteriorated from the impression of the principal object in the Roman capital; while the dwarfish and insignificant buildings surrounding the mass he had in view, gave by contrast a more distinct idea of the gigantic edifice towards which they operated as a foil.

Looming indistinctly through the vapours of night, he had subsequently an opportunity of regarding it divested of its detail, which were shrouded from the view by a London fog, and with all the points capable of diverting attention hid from sight, or wrapt in partial obscurity; and he could not but feel the sublime effect produced, as the simple and graceful outline of its form alone testified

testified its massive proportions, and gave to it the resemblance to one of Egypt's pyramids.

As he entered the Temple, he paused to admire its ancient and venerable church, its Gothic hall, and its gardens, extending to the majestic river, whose banks they grace. He was here received with the utmost hospitality by Marmaduke Vavasour, who, in doing the honours of his home, dismissed much of the coldness and reserve Henry had before imputed to him.

By him he was accompanied to the residence of general Montrose, where Vavasour left him, whose reception was most kind, and who informed him, that apartments in the neighbourhood were ready for his occupation; and that, if he would dine with him, he would detail the duties of his new employment.

Bending his course to Westminster Hall, where Marmaduke had appointed to meet him, he was astonished and delighted on arriving there, in witnessing its vast extent, and the beauty of its Gothic architecture; while the moral interest attached to it as the fountain head from which the administration of impartial justice, under the provisions of our admirable constitution, flowed, unpolluted, to the remotest districts of our empire. Amongst the many ornaments which the bar might then boast, he was called upon to observe him, who, in defence of his country's rights, and when required to vindicate, by the force of unrivalled and overpowering eloquence, the liberty of his fellow-subject, threw himself fearlessly in the breach in the hour of peril, and, reckless of danger, relied only for protection in the struggle, and for guidance in his path, on that Providence by whom he had been eminently gifted, and looking forward to the

the respect and applause of a generous and enlightened nation for his recompence, should he come forth victorious and unhurt from the combat to which he was equally impelled by feeling as by duty.—In Gibbs he was taught to view a being, cast in a far different mould, whose sterner virtue disdainfully rejected a momentary popularity accorded to the man, which was alone attributable to the lawyer. If his actions were afterwards tinctured by official severity, it was the result of conscientious conviction that his situation demanded it of him; but his sense of duty was unmarked by malignity; nor could his greatest enemy deny, that in all his measures he was directed by an undeviating attachment to the constitution of his country.—If in anticipation of the elevated goal to which supereminent talent and unblemished virtue might attain—if in calculation of the high results attendant upon a brilliant career as a statesman and a lawyer

—if in contemplation of the meed destined to reward a life devoted to a people's welfare, the pure course of which had been never tainted by the breath of calumny, it had been then permitted, in opening the records of futurity, to read the decree of fate, condemning him on whom a nation's hopes reposed, to fall, self-sacrificed, the victim of perverted reason, his eye would have shrunk with horror in tracing the doom reserved by the unsearchable wisdom of Providence, and at the dispensation annexed to the name of Romilly.

Henry was introduced, on arriving at the general's to dinner, to major Montrose, his son, and his niece, Mrs. Vernon, a young widow, who superintended the domestic establishment of her uncle. The lady was pretty, good-natured, and slightly sentimental. The major, with gentlemanly manners, possessed a frankness of speech, which, although closely allied

allied to bluntness, did not disagree with his manly countenance and martial air. He thought he had seldom witnessed such decided opposition of character, as between the major and his friend Marmaduke. The latter, polished in address, insinuating in manner, and profuse in expression, ever left upon the mind a doubt of his sincerity; the former, plain and simple in his port, and laconic in observation, yet imparted to those with whom he conversed the conviction of his honesty and truth.

When the cloth was removed, the general informed his guest of the nature of the avocations which would be allotted to him, regretting that they would occupy so much of his time, that the leisure hitherto devoted to his family would be extremely limited; but that if the duties demanded of him were actually severe, they would soon conduct to professional advantage and future ease.

"I feel

"I feel for Mrs. Everard," observed Mrs. Vernon, "in the sacrifice which is required of her in regard to your society. Those who have truly loved can alone be sensible of the pain of separation, however partial, from the object of their affections."

The major, however aware of the general good sense of his fair cousin, conscious that her affectation sometimes rendered her ridiculous, hastened to arrest a torrent of sentimentality.—"Upon my honour, Anne," he said, "you are enough to frighten Everard from his post, in treating his destination like that of a condemned regiment. There is no sacrifice that I see in the case; his temporary absences will enhance the pleasures of his fireside; for hard work he will have good pay and speedy promotion; and they, at all events, are better than thumps and bruises in the field."

"You cannot comprehend, major, the trembling anxiety — the tormenting doubts

doubts—the hourly fears, which agitate the affectionate bosom. Your sensibility——"

"Is bomb proof," observed he.

"Pray don't interrupt me.—Your affections are so wrapt in your profession, that you are unacquainted with the softer emotions which swell the feeling heart."

"Probably," he replied; "and your softer emotions may be a very graceful attribute, but they would find themselves rather badly off and neglected with us, who have at times to forage for food and quarters."

"Well, major, your case is, I see, hopeless, and you are wholy unsusceptible of those refined ideas which supply to delicate minds the wants attendant on the ordinary pursuits of life. I anticipate the delight of finding in Mrs. Everard one not insensible to the higher and more romantic impressions of nature."

"Nonsense, Anne! I engage Everard

rard will tell you she knows the whole kitchen battery, and that her greatest enjoyment is rocking her baby asleep, after he has treated her with a voluntary from his vocal organs, louder than the duke of York's march played in full band."

"Do not be so provoking; you delight to interrupt me. Your only music is the drum——"

"I prefer it certainly to hum-drum. But a truce to this war of words; let me invite you to afford Mr. Everard a better entertainment, in accompanying you to the theatre."

"Oh, you charming creature!" exclaimed the delighted Mrs. Vernon; "it is worth while disputing with you, as, if defeated, you always reward one's obstinacy in altercation, and I have not seen a play for an age."

Henry readily acquiesced in the proposal; and ere long they arrived at Covent-

vent-garden Theatre. It was the season when Mrs. Siddons, Kemble, and Cooke, were in the meridian of their fame, and in the full possession of their splendid powers. The performance was the sublime and terrific tragedy of Macbeth, wherein that unrivalled actress sustained the high reputation she had long acquired; and the impression produced by her wonderful talents was attested by the silent and breathless interest, and by the intense admiration, which attended her every word, look, and gesture. But if her scenic efforts procured her riches and renown, she had aspirations of a still higher and nobler aim; and has since borne with her the meed of the respect of the great and good to the retirement of private life.

To break the bonds with which prejudice and illiberality, in a darker age, had trammelled the followers of the drama, was the object of her brother's earliest

earliest emulation; and poor, unfriended, and unpatronized, but gifted with a firm but unpresuming spirit of independence, sound judgment, taste, and learning, he dared, in the consciousness of his integrity, popular odium and public reproach; disarming hostility by prudence, and weakening the efforts of passion or of party by polished manners and undeviating respect, he attained a hitherto unsought triumph, in elevating the character of his profession, and rescuing the histrionic art from disgrace, with a degree of skill as beneficial to his contemporaries and successors, as honourable to himself.

Haughty and irascible, the child of nature in her pettish mood, unfashioned by art, and without the attainments of education, deprived of dignity and grace, Cooke was enabled, without industry or endeavour, to identify himself with the characters he adopted, and develope with

with force and truth the maligner feelings and darkest passions of our nature.

At the conclusion of the tragedy, Henry arose, with his thoughts confused, and his attention exhausted by the intense and solemn interest of the scene he had witnessed.

As he turned to express to major Montrose the gratification he had experienced, he found he was engaged in conversation with a gentleman in the neighbouring box, and to his surprise, discovered in the person his brother, lord Bridgenorth. His lordship turned towards him a regard of the utmost apathy and indifference, without the slightest apparent desire of recognition, and as if a stranger had presented himself to his view. He was much emaciated, evidently still labouring under the effects of recent illness; and as he immediately afterwards left the box,

Henry

Henry could not resist his better feelings in following him to the lobby, where he soon gained his side.—"Bridgenorth," he said, in affectionately addressing him, "I have been truly grieved to learn that you have been ill, but trust you are now recovering from your malady. I could not refrain intruding upon you the expression of my sincerest sympathy in your late sufferings, and my satisfaction in seeing you in some measure restored."

"I am sensible to the concern you are pleased to evince," replied his lordship calmly, and without the least indication of kindly feeling, "but I should have been more happy, if, in acting with conformity to the wish of your family, I could judge you actuated at present, as you have generally been, less by impulse than principle."

"I would have hoped," said Henry, "that time and circumstance had obliterated the prejudices of the past. In neglecting

neglecting to comply with my father's desires, I was less prompted by self-indulgence than consideration for the future peace of my parent and myself, as the career to which I was destined, in entailing misery upon me, would, as I deemed, have laden his latter days with sorrow. Let me believe that you, at least, have not inherited, with his title, feelings unwarranted by the occasion, and, if I may so term them, unjust towards me."

"The expression is certainly appropriate, as applied by one who defied a father's authority and advice during life, and who cannot be presumed overburthened with respect to his memory after death. But I shall not quarrel with words: your father's sentiments in your regard accompanied him to the grave, and did not necessarily descend to me; but as they were founded on your violation of his most solemn injunctions, the grounds upon which they rested still exist;

and they have been subsequently aggravated by the misplaced alliance you have formed, which, in detracting from the respectability of your family, has strengthened the barrier previously opposed to our correspondence."

"Be it so, my lord," exclaimed Henry, indignantly. "In addressing you, on this occasion, I was urged by motives of affection; had it produced a correspondent feeling, I should have been most happy; but I own with sorrow my disappointment. When you are, however, pleased wantonly to overstep the bounds of delicacy and propriety, in alluding disrespectfully to the lady who bears my name, I beg to inform you, that she confers far more honour on my family than she can ever expect to derive from it."

As he turned indignantly to depart, his brother hesitated for a moment, but again addressed him—"Stop, Henry—hear me, Everard. Let me not be wholly

wholly misunderstood. If I have wounded your feelings, no wanton or malignant motive urged me; I speak from report—not the world's bruit—but from authority I dare not discredit. I may be deceived—so may you; and in the latter case, accept a warning to watch those by whom you may be surrounded; your happiness, your respectability, are equally at stake."

"My lord," replied Henry, "I would fain understand you, or seek to fathom the mystery with which your dark suggestions are shrouded; truth shuns not the light, and I despise and abhor the malignity which may have inspired you thus to speak. Let me depart in peace, while I recollect you are my brother; for if my anger rises superior to my disdain, I may regard you as the voluntary slanderer of unblemished innocence, and we may both long and vainly repent this unfortunate collision."

Turning

Turning upon his heel, sorrowful and indignant, Henry found that the agitation excited in him by his brother's words rendered him unfit to return to his party, and he hastily quitted the theatre, seeking, in the bustle of the crowd without, to dissipate the painful sensations which possessed him. Pausing at the entrance of the house, to consider in what manner he should reach the Temple, he saw his brother pass to his carriage, accompanied by another person, who, as the light fell upon his face, he discerned to be Marmaduke Vavasour. He was surprised, as the latter had never, in the slightest instance, referred to his acquaintance with lord Bridgenorth. He hastened to leave the house, and was happy to learn, on arriving at the Temple, that Marmaduke had not yet returned, and glad to seek that repose which his lengthened journey, and the occurrences of the evening,

evening, had rendered equally necessary to body and mind.

When they met at breakfast in the morning, Henry, for some time, refrained from the mention of his brother's name, in the hope that his friend would recur to the subject; but as he was wholly silent, Everard at length observed to him his having seen him in company with lord Bridgenorth the preceding evening.

"True," he replied, with real or affected indifference, "I met his lordship by mere accident last night at the theatre, and he insisted on my accompanying him home. I understood, from my family, that you did not correspond with him, and prudence induced me not to allude to the circumstance."

"Have you known him long?" demanded Henry.

"Our acquaintance has been of short

 date,"

date," he answered, "and may be yet considered as trifling. I was induced, by the entreaties of a mutual friend, to interfere, some short time since, in my professional capacity, in his lordship's concerns, and as he was embarrassed by circumstances affecting his peace and character, from which my services tended to relieve him, he has ever been anxious to evince his gratitude; but I must frankly confess that I am not partial to him, and when we meet, it is more the effect of accident than arrangement. He proposes to seek the benefits of an Italian climate, as his health has been much injured, and leaves town to-day for the North, to make the necessary preparations."

These observations removed every painful impression from Henry's mind with respect to Marmaduke, and he did not hesitate to recount the conversation with his brother, and the extraordinary and unjustifiable tenor of his discourse.

"I would

"I would not allow his words place in my memory," answered Marmaduke; "a licentious life has left him without faith in female honour or virtue, and the ill health consequent upon excess has rendered him querulous and vindictive. He has filled the cup of life with bitterness, and would make the rest of the world drink of the potion."

The conversation ended, and as Henry proposed leaving London by the evening mail, he readily accepted Mr. Vavasour's offer to accompany him in a stroll. Entering St. Paul's, he was struck by the silence which pervaded that vast edifice, and the imposing effect of grandeur which its naked and unadorned state conferred upon the interior, consistently with the simple nature of the rites to which it is devoted.

Having exhausted the morning in the contemplation of the superb monu-

ments, which attest the greatness of the capital, they returned to an early dinner, that Henry might be enabled to accomplish his departure in due time.

"To me," he observed, "London certainly appears without rival, the first city of the world, not alone in its monuments, its wealth, or extent, but in the moral character of its population, and the energy infused into all classes of society. In the countenances of individuals, you perceive, clearly and plainly impressed, the consciousness of their being the effective members of a great and enterprising nation, and interested in its important concerns. The setting sun concludes a day of general toil, and of general improvement, the operations of which affect, in a greater or less degree, the civilized world; for the march of intellect is no longer remarkable in its progress from age to age, but it is evident from day to day."

"True," replied Marmaduke; "the strength

strength and power of England has arisen from causes essentially at variance with all that has effected the greatness of other states, in ancient or modern times. Its earlier institutions, originating in occasion or accident, have been improved, and suited to each successive age, by the spirit of the people; and in investing each individual with a real and active share in the government of the country, have existed that moral activity, which enables us to arrive, by the shortest path, at truth, and secures a progressive and positive improvement in our characters, qualities, and resources."

"The religious character of the people is another proud distinction," said Henry. "I profess not the Protestant faith; I deem my own communion preferable; but I can appreciate the importance attendant upon the diffusion of religious knowledge. As certain as the code upon which our communions are

jointly founded is true, the divine favour must attend the efforts of a pious people."

"As the thing is established, it is well," answered Marmaduke; "but I am surprised at your being such an enthusiast, as to credit miraculous dispensations. The time is gone by when the dogmas of Christianity were implicitly received and believed; and as for myself, I would rather have more mathematical demonstration of truth than they are calculated to afford."

"I am sorry to ascertain your opinion," said Henry, "and trust it is not general or popular: but I must not forget that the mail, like time, stays for no man." He accordingly took leave of his friend, and entering the coach, pursued his return to Plymouth, where his preparations were soon completed for the intended change in his situation; and, with his small establishment, he shortly after returned to the metropolis.

Probably

Probably as far as it is permitted to human nature to partake of happiness, Henry, on his arrival, might be considered in the enjoyment of it. In the prime of life, of a noble and illustrious name, enrolled in an honourable profession, and possessed of the competent means of support, his station in the world was suited to his moderate, but not unambitious temper. In his domestic circle he was blessed by the youth, beauty, grace, and love of her to whom his faith and fate were attached, while the charms of her person could only be equalled by the qualities of her heart and mind. In the little Julia their affections were centered; and as each hour developed some novel grace, it served still more to endear her to her fond parents' hearts.

It is by contemplating such felicity in its meridian splendour, that we can duly estimate its extinction; and to be

truly sensible of its privation, we must regard its noontide brightness, and not pursue the gradations of its declension, if it be the will of Providence that it should ever become obscured.

On arriving at their lodgings, they found general Montrose and Mrs. Vernon awaiting them, by whom they were warmly welcomed, and who had exerted themselves to render their new habitation comfortable. The apartments were agreeable, as the windows looked upon St. James's-park; and the variety of objects that met her view were a source of delight to Mrs. Everard.

On the succeeding morning, Mr. Marmaduke Vavasour waited upon them, and made a tender of his services, which were accepted; and he accompanied them in a walk, where Mrs. Everard was equally amused and interested, by the busy, confused, and agitated scene she witnessed.

witnessed. On their return they found major Montrose expecting them; and Henry prevailed upon the gentlemen to remain to dine.

"You will soon be called upon duty, Everard," said the major, after dinner, "as the general, in a few days, leaves town for Windsor, whither you will be obliged to accompany him."

"*Semper paratus*," replied Henry, although not excessively gratified by this early summons; "how long shall we remain there?"

"Probably two or three days," said the major; "but Mrs. Vernon will, to the utmost of her power, atone for your absence towards your wife."

"By the way," observed Marmaduke, "I am sorry to learn that lord Bridgenorth has had a serious relapse on his road to Northumberland, and that the worst consequences are apprehended."

"His lordship," said the major, "is

now paying the penalty attendant upon his short-lived pleasures."

"In what respect?" demanded Henry, whose long absence from England made him ignorant of his brother's pursuits.

"I am surprised at your inquiry," said the major, "for his course of life has not been secret. His fortune and health have both suffered by excess, which has also materially affected his character. Can you inform me, Mr. Vavasour, how the business relating to the jewels terminated?—the robbery which took place some months since?"

"I am not positive," answered Marmaduke; "but I believe they were recovered, and the guilty person dismissed his service."

"Was she not his mistress? The world said so, I think."

"It was so reported: but for the credit of his lordship's taste, I would be inclined to doubt the fact, as I would not suppose him capable of degrading himself

self by such a connexion. She appeared in the character of his servant or housekeeper." ....

"He was not very delicate, it is said, in his choice of pleasure," continued the major, who seemed obstinate in continuing a subject which could not be deemed as agreeable as it was novel to Henry; "and I suppose that he was consequently deterred from prosecuting her. Do you know what became of her?"

"Upon my honour," said Marmaduke, rather piqued, and confusedly, "I know no more than the world in general, and do not feel peculiarly favoured, by being selected to answer on a point which would confer little credit on me, were I alone able to give you the information you seek."

"I beg your pardon," answered the major, "if I have offended you; but I was somewhat interested on the point, as a man who served under me in the

West Indies, and is at present on the recruiting service here, pretends to be her husband, and applied to lord Bridgenorth, prior to his leaving town, to ascertain her present residence; but he was referred to a gentleman of your name and profession, as he informs me: but I presume there has been some error in the business, so let us drop the subject."

Marmaduke was for a moment discountenanced by the calm manner in which the major pronounced this, and a certain scrutinizing glance, which Henry thought he perceived.—" My interference was certainly requested," he replied, with hesitation—" but merely professionally. I did not see lord Bridgenorth on that occasion; but wrote him, that it was my advice to silence the matter for his own sake: the woman (now I recollect) was discharged; but more of her I know not. If you will send the man to me, however," he added,

after

after a moment's consideration—"I should like to see him."

The major gave a sign of assent; but did not pursue the discourse.

There was, in what had occurred, something to render Henry dissatisfied with Mr. Vavasour, as, although the subject might not be deemed particularly interesting to him, it seemed extraordinary that no reference to it had ever occurred. His friend's mode of disclosing his knowledge of it, in answer to the major's interrogatories, had been unnecessarily uncandid; and the first favourable impressions his acquaintance with Marmaduke had created, were in some measure effaced.

They were soon summoned to the drawing-room, where Henry and the major were engaged in conversation respecting the employment of the former, until

until their attention was diverted by Mrs. Everard's exclaiming, as the servant entered with the infant—" For God's sake, take care of the child, Edwards—you had nearly let it fall. Do you feel unwell?" she continued, as the housekeeper turned pale and trembled.

" A swimming in my head, madam," she answered, " which sometimes seizes me—allow me to retire."

Henry hastened to take the infant; and as the housekeeper departed, he thought he observed a significant glance directed towards her by Marmaduke; but as it might have been occasioned by the interest of the moment, he did not give it much attention.

" Poor Edwards," said Mrs. Everard, " I should be grieved were she ill—she is a faithful good creature, and I could not do without her."

" I understood from my family," observed

served Marmaduke, "that she is a valuable domestic; you must consider yourselves happy in having her, as, I assure you, it is difficult to procure servants with her qualifications—we know not whom to trust."

"True," said the major; but there was in the tone in which the assenting monosyllable was pronounced, something that seemed to disconcert Marmaduke. "How long have you had her?" he continued.

"We met with her on our arrival at Plymouth," replied Mrs. Everard: "we were glad indeed to meet with any person at that moment: her manner made a favourable impression, and we have not been deceived in her character."

"Had she any?" abruptly demanded the major.

"Come, come," said Mrs. Everard, "you must not subject Edwards to your court of inquiry, gentlemen."

"It is not fair indeed," observed Marmaduke;

maduke; "if she fulfils her duties, it is more than half the world does in the same class; she has certainly——"

"Found an advocate," said the major, half laughing; but his words put an end to the observations of Mr. Vavasour, who soon afterwards took his leave, and was shortly followed by the major.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

A friend;—a bold one too, who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you.

The Gamester, Act III. Scene 4.

The Friend.

HENRY devoted himself incessantly to the duties of his office, which were of a more arduous nature than he had been led to expect; but the toil attending his situation was of trifling consideration, in comparison with the disagreeable necessity of separating himself from his family. He was frequently obliged to be absent from his wife and child for successive days; and when that was not the case, returned

returned so late in the evening to his home, as to have but little leisure for those social and domestic pleasures which were his highest gratification, and which he was well adapted to enjoy. To Mrs. Everard, this change in their mode of life was extremely painful; but a sense of duty forbade complaint; on the contrary, during the brief intervals of her husband's presence, she redoubled her attentions to recompense, if possible, the labour and anxiety to which he was obliged to submit. Mrs. Vernon, who, to much good nature, joined a sincere regard for her, persuaded her to accompany the general's family into society; and her intreaties being aided by those of Henry, she was unable to refuse, although her taste would have induced her to prefer the more tranquil scene her home presented.

Mr. Marmaduke Vavasour, who had also become intimate at the general's, afforded

afforded on such occasions protection to the ladies, as major Montrose had been under the necessity of leaving London. When not otherwise engaged, he generally passed his evenings at Henry's, when the latter was at home; but as his return was doubtful, and regulated by casual and unforeseen circumstances, Mrs. Everard was under the necessity of bearing him company oftener than she could have desired during her husband's absence. From him Mr. Vavasour always met with a cordial welcome, in acknowledgment of the civilities which had been so liberally bestowed by his family and himself; while his wife, from the same sentiment, and in conformity with her husband's wishes, could not shun or prevent his constant visits. She exerted her endeavours to repress an undefined feeling of repugnance, which had birth within her breast towards him who styled himself her husband's friend, and which, with every effort to

the circumstances on which was founded her dislike, she feared to allude to the subject. On her husband's part, the confidence he had in the honour of his friend, notwithstanding what had occurred, the entertainment he derived from his discourse, and the attentions he continually evinced towards the family, did not permit the most transient doubt in respect to the nature of his visits; and he even esteemed as a compliment the preference shewn by him for their limited society, rather than the more splendid allurements which his extensive acquaintance with the world afforded.

To a refined taste for music, Mrs. Everard added a passion for that science, which had induced her to express the wish of witnessing the performance of an Italian opera, and which was no sooner understood by Mrs. Vernon, than she hastened to procure from a friend the loan of a box at the King's Theatre.

The

The offer was readily accepted by Mrs. Everard, upon the condition that her husband would be able to accompany her on the ensuing Saturday.

"No provisos, my dear Jane," said the widow; "the rage for the opera this season has been unexampled; and it was with the greatest difficulty I could obtain lady Lorimer's key. Everard will, I am sure, contrive to be with us; but should he be prevented, Mr. Vavasour has consented to become our champion for the evening."

Mrs. Everard was however firm in adhering to her original proviso, until her husband's entrance, and the persuasion he used to induce her to comply, removed every difficulty; and she gave an unconditional assent with less hesitation, as he had also little doubt of being in time to join them. Contrary to her hopes and expectations, Mr. Everard had

had not arrived on the appointed evening; but as he intended to follow them to the theatre, she was obliged, with Mrs. Vernon, to place herself under the protection of Mr. Vavasour.

In proceeding up the great staircase of the theatre, Mrs. Everard's foot slipped, and she must have fallen, had he not caught her in his arms, and expressing his fear of her being hurt, he continued to retain her in his hold, until her alarm had so far subsided, as to enable her to relieve herself, and to be sensible to the impropriety of his conduct. It required a slight struggle to free herself from his arms, and she could not help regarding him with a look of indignation.

An air of triumphant pleasure, on the contrary, marked his features; and as he made his apology, she turned with disgust and fear from the passionate regard with which he encountered her eyes.

eyes. Her first movement was to return home; but sensible of the pain it would cause her friend, who, in preceding them, had been heedless of her accident, she reluctantly proceeded to the box, carefully avoiding the attentions which her persecutor was still ardently offering. The delightful music of "Semiramide," the splendour of the theatre, the brilliant assemblage, and the vocal performance, however, lost almost all their charms; for confused, displeased, and alarmed, she was now unable to enjoy an entertainment which otherwise would have afforded her the highest gratification; and she awaited with anxiety her husband's arrival.

At the conclusion of the act, Mrs. Vernon hastened for an instant to speak with a lady in a neighbouring box, ere Mrs. Everard could retain or accompany her, and she found herself left alone with the person whom she had such just

reason to detest. Having accidentally dropped her glove, she strove to recover it; but Mr. Vavasour prevented her ere she gained it, and as he bent in presenting it to her, pressed the hand she had extended to receive it, suddenly and passionately to his lips. An insult, to which she had never yet been subjected, acted like an electric shock upon her frame, and trembling with violent and unaffected agitation for some moments, the power of utterance was denied her. She at length forced herself to address him, although her emotion almost deprived her of the faculty of speaking.—"If you are capable of forgetting the respect due to me as a woman, sir, let me advise you to regard what is due to Mr. Everard: I insist that you allow me instantly to retire." Rising to quit the box and seek Mrs. Vernon, she had but just reached the door, when it suddenly opened, and that lady entered with Henry, whom she had met in the corridor.

ridor. Her joy at seeing him, joined to the confusion and terror into which she had been thrown, were too powerful for her nerves, and seizing his hand she burst into tears.

"What, in the name of Heaven, has happened, my dear Jane?" exclaimed Mrs. Vernon, while her husband regarded with astonishment the emotion of his wife.

"Mrs. Everard has been this moment seized with a severe pain in her head," answered Mr. Vavasour, with apparent interest, and assumed calmness, "and I was on the point of leading her into the lobby for the benefit of the air, as you entered."

The ease with which this falsehood was pronounced had such an effect on the surprised Mrs. Everard, who had partially recovered from her fears, and whose innocent and unsuspecting mind had been ever a stranger to dissimula-

tion and artifice, that her confusion was renewed, and the blood mounted to her face, at the cool audacity of the offender; while on his part, not the slightest symptom betrayed the knowledge of any other cause for her agitation than that which he had adduced. Incapable of untruth, Mrs. Everard in vain strove to account for her disturbed state, and was on the point of disclosing the insolence she had experienced, when the frown that sat upon her husband's brow, as he met her regard, and which was the first she had ever seen displayed towards her, deprived her of the means of explanation; and shocked, agitated, and overcome, she was seized by an hysterical affection, that rendered it necessary to remove her from the theatre.

Henry, whose anger had for a moment been excited by what had appeared to him extraordinary in his wife's conduct, from the confused attempts to account

account for the state in which he had found her, on beholding her actual condition, bore her in his arms to the concert-room, where by the activity of Mr. Vavasour in procuring restoratives, she soon recovered her senses. On the return of thought, she felt instantly the necessity of concealing the circumstances that had thus tended to distress her, from her husband's knowledge, or of reserving the disclosure for a future and more suitable moment. The evident indications of antipathy which she had evinced towards Mr. Vavasour, with the severe consequences of the insult she had sustained, would, she doubted not, prevent the recurrence of offence; while the temper of her husband, if once aroused by the relation of an action so injurious to her whom he passionately loved, so dishonourable and disgraceful to his pretended friend, might impel him to measures in which his life and her happiness might be fatally compromised.

On their reaching home, she immediately retired; while Mr. Vavasour, who had not feared to accompany them, explained to Henry that her intense attention to the representation at the theatre, the extraordinary glare of light, and the heat of the house, had, at the termination of the first act, suddenly and violently affected her. The calm tone, and unmoved feature with which he uttered the statement, removed every painful impression from Henry's mind, and the event was soon wholly obliterated from his memory.

With Mrs. Everard the case was different: the tender solicitude of him whom as life she loved, was for the first time painful to her; the secret weighed heavy on her heart; but as she sighed to reveal it to him, who was ever the repository of her pure and innocent thoughts, the fears of inciting him to peril arrested the disclosure. To receive the

the false and pretended friend of her husband, without manifesting her detestation and indignation, she found impossible; and she trembled at the idea of again encountering him. But, to her relief, he seldom intruded upon them; or when he did visit them, it was at a moment when she was in company; and as he addressed her merely on ordinary subjects, she trusted he had seen his error, and that she was ensured against other improper or misplaced attentions.

Henry was on his return home, at a late hour of the evening, through St. James's park, some months subsequent to the event last referred to, and had nearly gained the gate, when he observed a man and woman preceding him in earnest and low conversation. As he thought he recognised the female, he slackened his pace, and kept them in view until he observed them arrive at

his own door, where they took leave of each other; but prior to their separation he heard the man observe—" Be faithful to his orders, and he will pay you well: he is a noble gentleman, your friend, Mr. Vavasour."

The only reply was a sign of silence, and by the light of the lamp he saw Mrs. Edwards enter the house.

The man returned towards him, and in passing, he saw that he wore the serjeant's uniform, and the ribbands indicative of his being employed on the recruiting service. The truth at once flashed upon his mind, and it became evident that the observations of major Montrose, on a former occasion, and the conversation in the mail-coach, referred to his housekeeper. Desirous, if possible, of elucidating the mystery without delay, he called to the serjeant, who, perceiving that he was summoned by a gentleman

tleman in a military undress, immediately returned.

"On what duty are you in London?" he demanded.

"On the recruiting sarvice, plaise your honor—picking up the clodhoppers."

"Where are you quartered?"

"At the Pig and Fiddle in Petty France, your honor."

"How long have you been in London?"

"A wake and a fraction, your honor."

"Where do you come from, and what is your name?"

"From Lough-Swilly, your honor; and my name is Pat Edwards, for want of a better."

"What were you doing at my door?"

"Why, hadn't I a bit of randy woo with Bet—begging her pardon, Mrs. Pat Edwards as is; Bet Waters as was, at your honor's sarvice."

"Why did you not enter the house?"

"My duty wouldn't let me, your honor, as my prisince mightn't be agreeable."

"Why so?"

"Becase Bet is a bit particklar or so, and scorns to be high, or to be known as Mrs. Pat Edwards, your honor; and having run her rig, is looking arter her carakter, and is become as sarious as a black Brunswicker. She was another guess sort of a body formerly, and like a shamroc when she was young, rather grane or so; but, at this prisint spaking, she's as staid as a shelelah, and smooth as the lake of Killarney."

"Why did you quit your wife?"

"Why, wasn't it my honor that forced me?"

"How?"

"Your honor wouldn't have me shame the regiment by taking Bet into gentale society, after she had been gallivanting, like sea-fish in the Shannon, and was no better

better than a broken marchant. By the pipers of Limerick, it wouldn't have been dacent at all at all; tho' she's now a rilagious sort of a creture; and if she would give up her ways, she'd be a jewel, as Judy Mac Cowl said of her sow."

"Do you know Mr. Vavasour?"

"I do, to a tay, your honor, as he's the friend of Bet under the rose; but he begged me to be asy on the subject, and not to be publishing on it."

"When do you leave town?"

"To-morrow night at four in the morning, your honor; we march for the depôt."

"Can you call upon me in the morning, at nine o'clock?"

"With all the plishur in life, your honor; and am after wishing your honor good night."

"Good night, serjeant; and here's something for the Pig and Fiddle."

On entering the room, he found Mrs.

Everard alone, and he deemed it prudent, as she was as yet wholly unsuspicious of her domestic, not to give her pain by developing the intelligence he had gained, being resolved, if possible, to fathom the hidden connexion existing between Mrs. Edwards and his friend Vavasour.

That Mrs. Edwards was identified with the person represented in an infamous light by those with whom he had formerly travelled in the mail-coach, Henry could no longer doubt. The serjeant's answer had tended to confirm the injurious reports he had heard, and the reserve evinced by herself, with respect to her life and connexions, gave confirmation of their truth. To free his house from the bane of her presence, he felt to be necessary; but a warm anxiety to ascertain the ties by which she was allied to his friend, induced him to defer putting his intent into execution, until he

he had consulted major Montrose on the subject.

The next morning Mr. Vavasour paid them a visit, in representing himself as deputed ambassador from Mrs. Vernon, to furnish them with tickets for a masqued ball, proposed to be given in the course of a fortnight, on a magnificent scale, at the King's Theatre; and whither she and the general promised to accompany them, should their invitation be accepted.

"I will frankly confess," replied Henry, "that, from what I have learned of the nature of that species of entertainment, it has no peculiar charms for me; I cannot however speak from experience on the subject."

"I agree with you in principle," said Mr. Vavasour; "but the present must not be confounded with those public masquerades, where a guinea is the only qualification

qualification demanded to become a partaker. This fete is under the immediate direction of persons of high rank and character; and those only who are known in society, and are respectably recommended, can obtain admission. If you choose to witness a spectacle of this nature, the present occasion affords unusual advantages. The general will be with us, and together we shall form a party, to which, were they otherwise to be apprehended, insult or importunity would not be offered."

"I shall leave the decision entirely to you, Jane," observed her husband.

"I have not the slightest curiosity to see a masquerade, I assure you, my love," she answered, "and am quite sure I should be wholly out of place at one; however sensible of the kindness that dictated the request, I would beg your permission to decline it."

"I fear it would also be out of my power to be present," said Henry, "as I shall,

shall, of necessity, be absent from town on that day; but as we dine to-morrow at the general's, we will explain our reasons for not profiting by his attentions."

The day passed without the appearance of the serjeant; and upon sending to the sign of contrasted harmony, the Pig and Fiddle, he was mortified to find that the recruiting party had unexpectedly been ordered to leave town the same morning for the depôt.

For some days nothing occurred, as the delay of major Montrose, in returning to town, prevented the dismissal of Edwards; and Henry was in turn under the necessity of proceeding to Canterbury, whither he returned by some days earlier than he had hoped. As he approached his house, at a late hour of the night, and was about to cross the street to his own door, he was surprised

prised at seeing it open, and a man, wrapped in a cloak, leaving it. Alarmed at the idea of some danger to his family, he followed the person, favoured by the obscurity of the night, until at the end of the street the lamp suddenly disclosed the features of Mr. Vavasour. The hour, the secrecy observed, his own supposed absence, all combined to give birth to a momentary doubt, which, however, he instantly expelled; and recollecting the connexion subsisting between Vavasour and Edwards, he applied to the latter the cause of the extraordinary visit which had taken place. With this impression he entered his house; Mrs. Everard had retired to rest, and Edwards only was up. When in his chamber, sleep fled his eyes, and often as he strove to banish the phantoms of suspicion or distrust, they would return to molest his peace; and he determined within himself to have an explanation with Mr. Vavasour upon the subject.

subject. The age and character of Edwards opposed no barrier to the belief of a personal intrigue; but that it should be prosecuted under his own roof, and that, with such a licentious disposition, she should yet remain in servitude and constraint, when the means of gratifying her abandoned desires were as attainable as desirable to her, were contradictions he could not reconcile. In Mrs. Everard nothing announced a knowledge of what had occurred; and Henry awaited impatiently major Montrose's arrival to procure a solution of the mystery.

An important change had taken place in the mind of Henry within a brief space of time, and a depression of spirits, which he could not resist, and feared to acknowledge, had superseded the calm and tranquillity that he had hitherto enjoyed. The anticipation of ill, and the sense of approaching danger, with which most have been visited, while yet disaster

aster and misfortune are wholly undefined, had possessed him; and as the mariner dreads the coming storm, while to inexperienced sight no menace of peril is afforded, the fear of accident weighed on his heart, while he vainly strove to account for his uneasiness.—"Let me banish suspicion from my mind," he said, "and let not doubt find refuge in my breast. If there be truth in woman, Jane is its repository; if we can trust the marks of ingenuousness and candour, faith is her attribute; and it would be to offend against the light of heaven to doubt her purity."

He spurred his horse onwards towards London, as he thus soliloquized, on his return from duty; but his attention was suddenly arrested by the horse starting at a man, whom Henry's abstraction had prevented his observing, and who, placed in the middle of the road, armed with a pistol, was evidently determined to obstruct his progress.—"Leave my path

path free," said Henry, "or dread the consequences," as he also drew a pistol from his holster.

"Satisfy my demand first," exclaimed the man; "give me your purse!"

Henry prepared to answer this appeal by instantly discharging the weapon which he held, but a moment's observation of his opponent's figure arrested his arm.

It was in a narrow lane, in the vicinity of the metropolis, that he was thus addressed, by one whose mean and tattered garments evidenced his misery, while the white hairs shaded a venerable face, on which want and sorrow had set their marks; his pale and grief-struck countenance strangely contrasted themselves with the act he seemed ready to commit. His hand trembled with emotion, as he held the offensive weapon; and

and his evident infirmity seemed to suit little with his purposed violence.

"Put aside your pistol, and let me proceed, or the consequence be upon your own head," Henry again exclaimed.

"I would arrest Heaven's angel in his course," he wildly answered. "Misery is my strength—famine my plea;—wretchedness renders me reckless;—be quick, sir! no time is to be lost; your purse——"

As he again presented his pistol, Henry leapt from his horse, and in a moment his opponent lay extended upon the ground, although with no greater violence than was necessary to prevent the execution of his criminal design, which was easily frustrated by the excessive difference between the physical strength of Henry and his aged assailant. Possessed of the pistol, the former attempted to discharge it in the air; but again,

again, it missed fire, and, on examination, it proved to be uncharged, and so old and laden with rust, as to be evidently unfit for other than the purpose of alarm.

"What means this?" demanded Henry, in an altered tone, as he raised the wretched being from the earth, whose features no longer retained their fierce and wild expression, but were now marked by the unmixed impression of wretchedness, grief, and remorse: "speak frankly!—inform me of your motive for this act, and, if it be in my power, I will relieve you."

"Great God of Heaven!" he exclaimed, "look down with mercy on me: pardon the wretched heart-broken creature, who dared to turn aside from thee, and with this withered arm defy thy Providence."

He here wept bitterly for some time, while

while Henry, moved by compassion, endeavoured to console him: but to his repeated inquiries as to the causes of his misery, he could only reply by pointing to a grass-covered narrow, and seemingly untrodden lane, towards which he moved slowly, and in silence.

Following his feeble steps, they shortly arrived at a hovel, which scarcely seemed to have been destined for the use of man, so wretched was its appearance. Henry tied his horse to the shed, and stooping, entered the miserable place, which scarcely boasted light enough to give to view an elderly female, in a tattered garb, seated near a loathsome and dirty rug, which served to divide the close and narrow room they were in. Their entrance seemed not to be noticed by her, although her eyes were fixed upon them; nor did she appear in the least affected by their presence, until the old man proceeded to draw aside the tattered

tattered curtain, when she sprang forward with a degree of energy which her years would not have warranted, and withheld his arm. Some forcible emotion so overpowered her, that she could not speak, but with convulsive gesture pointed to the place shrouded by the rug, and seemed inclined to restrain the interposition of her aged partner.

At length tears came to her relief; and, amid broken sobs and groans, she was after some time enabled to address him.—" Where have you been so long? —wherefore did you tarry ?—you were wanted here—but now it is too late. She sleeps, but it is not the sleep of Lazarus, for never, oh, never will she awake !"

Her companion comprehending her meaning, raised his hands to heaven, and wept violently.

" Why

"Why weep you?" she exclaimed, in the cold accent of hopelessness and despair; "fond, foolish man! why do you weep?—my eyes are tearless—I bore her in my womb—this bosom nourished—these arms supported—this heart cherished her—yet I cannot weep! She was good, and young, and beautiful—yet I cannot mourn her! Disgrace and infamy were hers—and I complain not! When but now I heard her death-cry, and saw her limbs convulsed in agony; when she clang, in her dying moments, to my breast, fearful of death's summons—when she faintly whispered her supplication for a little food, to stay her parting—and when her eyes became fixed in their last, last look upon me—when her cold hand grasped mine, for the last time, I unfolded her from my embrace—I laid her, cold and lifeless, on the earth, and yet I felt not! but when I strove to close her eyes—oh, then that fixed unmeaning look pierced my heart!

—yet

—yet then, even then, I did not dare to hope she was not dead—for the world was darker to her than the shadow of death itself!"

With a degree of violence that attested her mental anguish, she now drew her husband to the curtain, and pulling it suddenly aside, pointed to the corpse of a youthful female, that lay extended on some straw. Her regard dwelt intensely on the convulsed features of her trembling and aged husband, as he viewed the body, to which she pointed with desperate and unnatural energy; until viewing the tears roll down his furrowed cheeks, she burst into a loud hysteric laugh, that was again succeeded by a flood of tears, which restored the wretched mother to her reason, and to a more tempered sense of her misfortune.

"My child, my poor, poor child!" she passionately exclaimed, as she kissed her

pale and dewy forehead, "my innocent, long-suffering child! to see thee thus—I could better hear your cry for food, than thus to clasp you! In all our misery, the visitation of Heaven was light, compared to this! You are gone, gone for ever from me!—but the will of God be done! in sorrow there is mercy, and joy succeeds to suffering—my hour too must soon approach."

After giving free vent to her grief, the hapless female invited Henry to approach, and pointing to her daughter's form, exclaimed—"She never gave pain to her parent's heart—she never forgot her duty to her Maker—she never injured created being; yet you behold a sacrifice to lust—you view a victim to atrocious villainy, which drew disgrace and want upon her family—shame and ruin, infamy and death, upon herself!"

Henry, deeply affected by the scene he

he witnessed, deferred the explanation he desired to another moment, and strove to alleviate their misery by presenting the man with all the money he had about him.

In the excess of his acknowledgment, the wretched being stated, that for two days they had not known sustenance; and that their child's existence might have been materially prolonged, had she received food and succour.

Henry shuddered at the tale, and left the cottage, promising to return early, and provide aid for the wretched pair, and fit interment for their child.

CHAPTER VI.

All is oblique :
There's nothing level in our cursed natures
But direct villainy.
Timon of Athens, Act IV. Scene 3.

The Tale.

THE sympathy of the party who dined at the general's was aroused by Henry's narration of the occurrences of the morning; and a visit was agreed upon for the ensuing day to the hut of the unhappy pair. A subscription was, the same evening, set on foot among the general's guests; and, independent of the aid he had already afforded, Henry found himself the bearer of a considerable sum, destined for the relief of the aged

aged couple. Not content with the liberal supply for their temporary need, he strove to obtain some permanent employ for the man, should he hereafter be found to merit their bounty; and the interest of those present promised, in that case, to secure him some decent situation, from which a maintenance might be derived.

The refusal of the tickets proffered by Mrs. Vernon for the approaching masquerade became the topic of that lady's remonstrances in the course of the evening; and she so anxiously pressed upon them the acceptance of her offer, and urged them so warmly to seize an occasion, that would but seldom recur, to witness a spectacle, which, from the plan on which it was proposed to be conducted, promised pleasure, unaccompanied by annoyance, and as the general had declared his intention to be present, these objections were finally over-

ruled, although Henry yet doubted the possibility of his accompanying them.

Mrs. Everard yielded her slow and unwilling assent to the proposal; but in conformity to her husband's will, she acquiesced at length, although she anticipated little enjoyment, from the nature of the entertainment, especially should his absence prevent his sharing it with her.

Henry was agreeably surprised, on the succeeding morning, by a visit from major Montrose, for whom his esteem had increased upon acquaintance, and whose greatest pleasure appeared to arise from being useful to his friends. Hearing of the humane and charitable purposes to which the day was devoted, he agreed to be of the party in visiting the cottage.

The ladies having preceded them in the

the carriage, Henry, as he rode along with the major, related, without reserve, the various incidents which had recently occurred to disturb him, and to create unfavourable suspicions on the character of Vavasour and the conduct of Mrs. Edwards.—"What," he observed, "can be their design, it is difficult to comprehend. Mr. Vavasour's reserve, if it be not more justly named insincerity, has, I must confess, surprised me on many occasions; but as the subjects were in themselves trifling, I rather imputed to his natural character the silence he adopted in respect to them, than attributed them to positive intention, or a hidden motive. His acquaintance with Edwards has been of some duration, as it evidently had its origin in his professional interference with lord Bridgenorth's affairs; but the mysterious revival, and the continuation of the connexion, at this moment, with a woman of her character, is of itself mysterious;

and looking to the relation she bears to us, I would have deemed, that as a friend and as a gentleman, he would have availed himself of the knowledge he possessed of her crimes and character, rather to have warned us of the infamy of her life, than to become her protector and associate, or to tamper with her beneath my roof."

"However little creditable it may be to his honour or taste," observed the major, "I must attribute his conduct wholly to the spirit of low intrigue; although you have certainly recounted circumstances sufficient to embarrass me in coming to any conclusion."

"I shall instantly dismiss the housekeeper," said Henry, "and require of Mr. Vavasour an explanation of his recent conduct."

"I would pause for some days yet, in regard to either measure," answered the major; "while the former deems herself secure in your supposed ignorance of her

her past life or present connexions, you have, for a brief period at least, little to dread. If mischief be on foot, and its direction undetermined, a hasty and abrupt procedure might deprive you of the clue which may lead to its developement; and if they have any purpose beyond that which I have conjectured, it would be preferable, for your future comfort, to ascertain at once its actual character, rather than, by an interference too premature, shutting out the means of knowledge, and continuing the doubt and obscurity in which their designs are at present hidden."

"After all," said Henry, "we may be the slaves of error, and a direct and frank appeal to Vavasour may at once throw light upon the mystery, and tend to banish all want of confidence and distrust."

"No," answered the major; "I must freely confess that my opinion of your friend is unfavourable. However limited the opportunities I have had of judg-

ing of him may have been, I have vainly endeavoured to destroy the impression he has made upon me, of his being at once artful, selfish, and designing."

"But his object?" demanded Henry.

"I will not take upon me to decide; but I am certain that a strict and prudent observance of his actions must, ere long, tend to a discovery of his secret."

"I shall adopt your advice," replied Henry; "and as any communication, at this moment, will only tend to pain and alarm my wife, without the slightest benefit, I shall keep her for the present in ignorance of my suspicions."

Arrived at the cottage, Henry was pleased at the change its aged inhabitants exhibited; their tattered garments had been exchanged for a plain and decent dress. The indulgence of food and rest had deprived their features of the misery with which famine had before impressed them. A comfortable bed

bed had been substituted for the straw upon which their ill-fated daughter had expired; while the corpse, fitly and decently prepared, was extended upon a table, in the centre of the room; and a girl had been employed to assist the aged couple in the melancholy office of arranging the funeral of their child. To their improved personal appearance was added an air of resignation; and the violent ebullitions of despair, which the moment of her decease had created, had yielded to more tranquil indications of sorrow, and that calmness of spirit which, when piously sought, is never denied to the stricken sufferer.

The old man came towards him on his entrance, and poured out the effusions of his heart anew, in grateful acknowledgment for the bounty dispensed to him. He was about to express his deep contrition for the outrage which marked their meeting on the preceding

day, when he was stopped by Henry, who endeavoured to console him by the assurance that he would recollect, with sentiments of pleasure, the opportunity afforded him of relieving such deep and, as he hoped, unmerited distress.

Mrs. Everard, in the mean time, had accomplished her mission, in depositing with the old woman the sum she had been delegated to supply to their wants; and her thanks were warmly and feelingly expressed for that large and unexpected relief.

Henry was also enabled to inform the old man, that he might probably have it in his power to procure him some reputable and permanent situation, capable of ensuring him competent support; and expressed his anxiety to learn the causes which had reduced a person of good education and manners to the deplorable

plorable state in which he had been found reduced.

"My history, sir," said the old man, "is short and simple. The evening of my days has been fearfully contrasted with the competence and content that attended my entrance upon life. We had long enjoyed the fruits of honest industry; my character was untarnished; my only child, who now lies lifeless there, was our hope, our joy, our pride, and comfort: but it was reserved to my age and feebleness to encounter the privation of the means of support—to find my reputation blasted—and to see the flower that bloomed by my side, beneath the sunshine of our better fortunes, fall, crushed and withered, broken by the hand of savage and unfeeling violence; guiltless before Heaven, but rejected of men, dishonoured, and an outcast from the world.

"My name is Holmes. The education

tion which a liberal father's care afford-me, by detracting from his own limited comforts, far exceeded the humble situation I was destined to fill in society. My thirst for knowledge, and my taste for reading, rendered the acquirement of books, and the possession of a library, the great aim of my ambition; and by unfailing industry, and a self-denial of all the ordinary indulgencies of youth, my desires were accomplished; and having attained, after many years, a sufficient sum, I established myself as a bookseller in the city, and found an honest maintenance attended by the gratification I had so earnestly and patiently sought. My stock was humble; my retired disposition had prevented the acquisition of many friends, or extensive patronage; but to perseverance and labour the ordinary comforts of life were accorded.

"When the age of my child calculated her for instruction, I recurred to my

my own acquirements for her improvement; and my zeal in cultivating her mind was met by the most earnest attention on her part. All the care I was enabled to bestow upon her was freely given; and although unprovided with many accomplishments which are deemed indispensable, even in the middle classes of society, she exceeded my warmest hopes, in evincing a correct judgment, a feeling heart, and the purest piety. She became, in the course of time, extremely useful to me in my trade; and her sense and manners attracted many persons to my shop, while the correctness of her conduct repressed the idea of insult or offence.

"Among others, a gentleman (whose demand for books, and whose friendly recommendations had become a source of considerable profit to me) used to take every opportunity afforded him of conversing with my poor Mary; and although his attentions became daily more

more manifest, there was nothing in his behaviour that demanded repression on her part, or notice on mine. The interest he took in my affairs induced him, as a friend, to urge the enlargement of my establishment, and to offer the means necessary to its execution, by advancing the money required for the purpose.

"Aware, from the period that I had been in trade, and the honest character I had endeavoured to maintain, that with pecuniary aid my profits must rapidly increase, there seemed a greater want of prudence in rejecting than in accepting his proffered liberality. I therefore gratefully acceded to the proposal, and regarding the comforts of my wife and child, felt an honest pride in viewing the increased means which would undoubtedly ensue to the extension of my business.

"When the period arrived in which my creditors were to be satisfied, and payment was demanded for the additional

tional stock I had obtained, the gentleman was absent from town, upon a visit to his family; but on my writing to him, he commissioned a person in London to make the necessary arrangements for the fulfilment of his promise. His agent was a female of respectable appearance, who occupied a small but neat house in the outskirts of the town; and the frequent mutual communications which the transaction demanded, induced an intimacy between us; to Mary she became particularly attached, and her attentions to my daughter were as kind as they were incessant. We often visited each other; and upon the return of the gentleman to town, he approved, in warm terms, an acquaintance which he represented to be of the most reputable nature.

"Whenever she could be spared, Mary passed her time with her new friend, and would occasionally become an inmate in her house for several days. At such

such times she had never perceived any thing in the character of her acquaintance which could alarm the most sensitive mind. If her manners were not so refined as we might have desired, yet in our state we were obliged to associate with those of the same class, while nothing in her principles or conduct, as far as we could ascertain, called for disapprobation. With few friends to protect or aid her, in the event of accident or misfortune to ourselves, we hesitated not to cultivate a connexion that could not be injurious, and might eventually become advantageous to her welfare.

"Six months had thus passed, during which Mary continued her intimacy, when on one occasion her absence was protracted longer than she had proposed; and not having received any communication from her for some days, I determined, in the evening, to ascertain the cause of delay, and left my house for the

the purpose, without doubt or fear in regard to her safety.

"Arrived at Kentish Town, I was overcome by astonishment and dread, in discovering the house to be shut up and wholly deserted. In a state of frantic distress, I endeavoured to acquire some information respecting its former occupant, from the people in the neighbourhood; but no one knew any thing respecting the person I sought, other than that she had taken the house furnished at the precise period of her introduction to us, and had abandoned it two nights previously, taking with her all she possessed; but of my child I could not gain the slightest intelligence. Trembling, I repaired to the habitation of the gentleman whose recommendation had led to this unfortunate acquaintance; but he was denied me. The noise of riot and of mirth within, however, broke upon my ears; and resolved instantly to discover the truth, and filled with fore-

bodings

bodings that he was the cause of my child's absence, I refused to quit the place before I had seen him. The discordant sound of revelry subsided, and the orgies were suddenly arrested, as my intention not to depart was announced; and at length he was under the necessity of admitting me to his presence.

"Surrounded by the companions of his ill-timed revelry and mirth, he shewed evident marks of confusion at my entrance; but when I abruptly demanded my daughter at his hands, or to be informed where I might seek my lost child, he assumed an air of affected surprise, and denied all knowledge of the circumstances. Of the proceedings of his female agent, he professed himself equally ignorant, representing that although he had confided to her the commission by which she had introduced herself to my family, that he had done so from a knowledge of the cha-

racter

racter of her husband, shortly before deceased; but that recent information he had acquired respecting her, had of late wholly estranged him from her; and he even had the hardihood to conclude his observations by reproaching me with not having duly consulted my child's interest, in having neglected more strictly to watch her actions; and, inflamed with wine, he even dared to insinuate his doubts respecting the principles of the unhappy being I sought. The latter suggestion excited the laugh of his unprincipled and unfeeling associates, and I was obliged to await the cessation of their cruel mirth.

"In all the concerns of life, fraud and artifice could not fail to prevail over truth and honour, were the villain efficiently to enact the part he had adopted; but it has been Heaven's provision, that the ruffian's eye should cower beneath the glance of honesty, and that the ruffian's

ruffian's tongue should falter in his simulated tale.

"Stung to madness by my wrongs, I yet remained fixed in silence, until confused and trembling beneath my regard, the suspicion of his guilt gave place to conviction. Summoning his demoniac spirit to his aid, and animated by the jeers and gestures which his inebriated companions lavished on my behalf, he subdued the agitation which momentary fear or remorse had engendered, and denounced as factitious the truth and virtue which he had laboured to destroy. Forgetful of my feebleness, I rushed forward to tear from the villain's throat the secret of my child's retreat; but the hand which could destroy the daughter's peace was not likely to respect the father's years. By a blow he levelled my aged head with the earth, where, for some time, I lay stunned, until reviving sense led me to regret that his cowardly violence had not been effectual

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in rendering me incapable of estimating the full extent of my future misery.

"The vile seducer and his satellites had left the room, but his domestic raised me from the ground, and vainly strove to appease the useless indignation of a weak old man. The night was far advanced when I left his chambers to seek my home, and I then felt the magnitude of my misery, as I proceeded, the solitary herald of despair, to the unsuspecting partner of my fate. When I reached my desolate dwelling, I found she had retired to rest, without the least anticipation of the severe blow levelled at her happiness. As I entered the room, she awoke from the last peaceful slumber she was fated to enjoy, and my resolution to reserve for the morrow the detail of our affliction, yielded to her first question respecting the child of her bosom. The contending passions to which, for some time, I had been a prey, had overcome my strength; weakness

ness and debility, proportioned to their violence, had succeeded, and I fell back upon a seat, and covering my face with my hands, I wept aloud. What she deemed the last extremity of human ill, seemed conveyed by this response to the heart of my poor wife.

'Great God, she is dead! my child is dead!' she exclaimed, as she rushed towards me.

"Alas! little could she suppose that the tale I had to tell would cause her more horror than if her child had lain coffined at her feet. In the state of mind to which I was reduced, the exercise of human judgment was denied—the truth, the dreadful truth broke from me, as my sobs and tears permitted my voice to be heard.

"In the acme of our distress, the expression of a woman's throes is not like ours; the tempest despoils the hardier trunk of all its graceful and smiling attributes, and if it be not broken by the storm,

storm, is left scathed, and bare, and withered; the humbler plant, however, bends before the blast, and although bowed for a time to the dust, if it become not again erect, it lifts its head slowly and gradually from earth.

'God help us now!' she said; 'this is a blow for which my age was not prepared. It is late in life to bear the first and heaviest brunt of affliction; but it will not endure, and we are told we must be patient. Oh that I should live to desire my child in her grave before me! yet could I be content to see her there, and we in the humble hope of meeting her hereafter; but earth and heaven at once foreclosed to her, is more than I can bear. But,' with sudden energy she exclaimed, as she contemplated more clearly her unbounded misery, 'the worm may dare to writhe beneath the heel that bruises it, and may he whose poisonous influence has infected the purity of her soul—has drawn

on her helpless head the contempt of man—the anger of her God—has made her corrupt and loathsome—the world's offence — the condemned of the Almighty — may he ne'er know peace more! may his life be lazar-like, and his death hopeless! may he be arrested in the full triumph of his course by the avenger's hand, and unadvised, be summoned before the last great assize, defenceless and unprepared!'

"I had recovered sufficiently to reprove the poor sufferer's appeal, and we strove to console each other during that long wretched night. The morning sun still found us wrapt in gloomy converse on our sorrows, until I began mechanically and cheerlessly to prepare for the accustomed duties of the day, deprived of all that could render them thereafter wholesome and pleasant to my feelings.

"I had scarcely succeeded in putting my shop in order, with a lingering hand

and

and heavy heart, when two men, of sinister appearance, entered, and having identified me as the person they sought, informed me I was their prisoner. I demanded the production of their warrant, and, as I ought to have anticipated, the loan so recently advanced me for the purpose of enlarging my trade, was the ground on which the writ had been issued under which I had been arrested. I yielded myself to their custody, after recommending to my unhappy wife so far to resist the affliction which threatened to overwhelm her, as to give her care and attention to my business, towards which I yet looked with hope, as the means of ultimately satisfying my inhuman creditor, and reinstating my character in the opinion of the world.

"But my calculations were false and futile. My oppressor, aware that my restoration to liberty and competence might prove the moment of his punishment, had exerted every effort to pre-

vent the public exposure of his conduct, and to avert disgrace. In the catalogue of human crimes, the unprovoked persecutions, accomplished and reserved, of the destroyer of my peace, might be ranked the chief. The honour of my child destroyed — our hearts withered, and our grey hairs ripening for the grave—myself within a prison's walls—my wife separated, under the most agonizing circumstances, from her husband and her child, would have been deemed as sufficient to gorge to satiety the appetite of revenge. But his Satanic fury was yet unsatisfied—his thirst for ill was yet unquenched; his was a heart which pity or remorse had never touched, and which teemed with every vile and hateful purpose. My stock in trade was seized to satisfy the debts my dungeoned limbs could never pay; a precipitate and counterfeit sale took place of my effects; and it was so contrived, that the whole was disposed of at a less price than

than my original and humble collection should have alone produced. Deprived of the last remnant of my property, I still remained a debtor to my insatiable foe, who seized the very bed upon which my wife reposed. Moneyless, unbefriended, heartbroken, and childless, we laid our aching heads upon the dank straw of my dungeon; and, without a covering to shield us from the winter's cold, we retired, with unappeased hunger, to give vent in darkness and captivity to our nightly tears.

"Deprived of hope, or motive of action, the inducements of our gaoler, rather than my own exertions, enabled me, after months of imprisonment, to take the benefit of an insolvent act; and although my applications were strenuously opposed in every stage, on the part of my creditor, and gratuitous calumny and unrestrained falsehood were lavished on me before the court, I was at length restored to what they termed liberty;

but to me it was the liberty of the ship-wrecked mariner, who, thrown on a barren shore, finds himself without the means of existence, the victim of a more tardy and severer doom than that he had just escaped.

"Released from prison, I resorted to the few former friends I had—not for pecuniary assistance, but, if possible, by labour to procure the necessary means of subsistence; but as the extent of my wrongs was less known than the slander levelled at my character, I was rejected by all—in some cases with indifference, in others with insult—but in every one without the slightest relief. With no intelligence of my hapless child, we gained a wretched and precarious support by the vilest species of travail, until my strength yielded to my exertions; and quitting London, we sought in this miserable hovel the termination of our fate. Death had no other horror for me but that of leaving in misery and want

want my wretched wife. We lingered on for some time, until three days since, my betrayed, degraded, but still dear child, arrived; and that drop was added which was wanted to make the cup of bitterness overflow.

"Her tale was one of horror. The female who had enticed her to her house was the infamous agent, the base pander, to the unlawful desires of him who, under the mask of friendship, had advanced the money. In the dead of night he was introduced into my Mary's chamber, while she lay under the influence of powerful opiates, administered for the hellish purpose, and her ruin was completed. The next day she became aware of all her misery, and immediately endeavoured to escape, and yet seek refuge in our arms; but she was closely guarded, and in the evening removed by force from London, to a solitary house in a neighbouring and retired village. The foul invader of her peace of mind, the

despoiler of her innocence, vainly strove to persuade her voluntarily to adopt the garb of infamy, and to become his mistress; but her mind was still unpolluted; she rejected with horror his base proposals, and expressed the disgust she felt at his baneful presence. Every insidious art was tried, without effect, to shake her resolution, and contaminate her mind; and when he who held her in bondage found all his efforts ineffectual, rage and hatred took possession of his heart, and the coward loaded her with insult and outrage. To her reiterated supplications to be restored to her family, he answered with scorn and irony; until one day he coldly informed her that her parents' dwelling was a prison, accompanied by want and wretchedness. The shock of this intelligence was too much for her delicate frame, and already exhausted by every species of ill-treatment, she sank beneath it. A fever fell upon her, and for weeks she lingered,

lingered, insensible to her sorrows and misfortune, neglected by her persecutor, and the wretch who had served to execute his plans.

"When the partial cessation of her malady restored her to the bitter sense of her situation, she found herself amidst a number of other female patients, in the ward of one of the hospitals of the metropolis, where, as soon as she could gain strength to speak, she prayed her attendant to seek her parents, in the hope that the information she had received from her persecutor might have been dictated less by truth than a desire to torment her; but no intelligence could be gained respecting us, nor of the fact, in what prison we were detained.

"The period was long ere she was declared to be convalescent: she was then discharged, a wanderer in the world's wide space, without home or friends. She reached our former residence, and there heard the tale of our calamity; but

still was unable to learn in which of the many receptacles of guilt and crime, with which the metropolis abounds, we were doomed to pine. At the gates of several prisons she applied without effect; and her inquiries were generally replied to with brutal levity, and obscenity or indifference marked the answers she received. Wandering through the streets, almost without covering, famished and debilitated, she was arrested as a vagabond, and sentenced by a magistrate to a month's sojourn within the precincts of Bridewell. At the expiration of the term, reckless of the consequences, she sought the presence of the author of her distress, not to reproach him, for that was useless; not to appeal to his charity, for her heart was broken; but, if possible, to learn our retreat, as she ascertained we had now quitted our prison. Patiently an entire day she waited his appearance, after having been repulsed with ignominy from his door,

and

and as the evening closed in, he descended to his carriage: remorselessly he spurned the wretched supplicant from him, and directed his servant to consign her to a constable; but the domestic had some share of human pity, for he supplied her immediate want of nourishment, and then informed her where we might be found, as his employer had kept a strict watch upon our movements, to stifle if necessary, at its birth, any attempt to vindicate our wrongs.

"She at length attained this miserable habitation: in the last extremity of wretchedness and want, when she reached her mother's arms, the feeling of joy to which she had so long been a stranger, was rapturously expressed. Although we regarded her at the moment as a willing sacrifice to vice, an apostate to our principles, the deserter of her parents, and the cause of our aggravated misery, we clasped the changed and fallen creature with transport to our bo-

soms, and blessed the dispensation that threw upon our wintry state that pale and sickly beam of sunshine; but when she uttered all her history of woe, the foul arts by which she had been betrayed, the dark treason to which she had been subjected, and her complicated sufferings, our agony cannot be expressed. When her tale was told, and we could turn from the reflection of her many and past griefs, to the actual reality of misery which we endured, what was the bitterness of our feelings, and what the extent of our despair!

"Mary was evidently on the verge of death; the features which we had never before beheld but animated by hope and joy, were now squalid and decayed; the eye once enlightened by cheerfulness and love, bore the ghastly brightness of approaching dissolution, and was hollow and sunken; the voice, upon whose accents we had hung enraptured, sounded like the summons of the tomb; the form

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we once admired was emaciated to the last degree; but while the frail tenement of clay declined rapidly towards its fall, the spirit which dwelt within was unaffected, her mind was pure, her heart was uncorrupted. Enfeebled by her journey, and the agitation attendant upon our meeting, we placed our child upon the bed of straw from which she never after arose. She asked some food —a morsel of bread, and we dared not answer her; from that moment she never repeated her request, until the tortures of famine and the agonies of death overcame her resolution, and then we had it not to give. The hours, as they pass over the wretch condemned within their circle to expiate his crimes, were not more agonizing than those during which we hung in bitterest anguish over the suffering being so dearly loved, so recently restored, so destitute of all that sickness needs. But when the last sad hour drew near, and she again

again prayed the pittance which might prolong yet a moment her existence, in the excess of my frenzy, I forgot my duty to my Maker, and determined to hazard destruction or acquire food. To you, sir, it was my crime to be opposed, and in just atonement of my offence, my guilt was complete, but unattended with the benefit I sought. The spirit of my child had already winged its flight to extenuate her parent's error at the throne of mercy. Your interference subdued the demon which possessed me; and, as I pray for pardon, I can even ask that it be bestowed on her destroyer; reparation from him is no longer possible; I seek it not—'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

——————Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths.

Hamlet, Act III. Scene 3.

The Masquerade.

THE unaffected narration of the misfortunes of poor Holmes had been listened to with the deepest interest by his visitors, and Henry having thus ascertained the causes of his degradation, announced that he would be able to procure him a subordinate situation in a public office, the duties of which would accord with his age and infirmities, and the salary sufficient

sufficient to provide him with the comforts of life. As it was desirable to remove the aged pair as early as possible from their wretched abode, the funeral of their daughter was appointed for the following Sunday; and the party present, to mark their sympathy in her hapless fate, agreed to attend upon the occasion.

In the interval, the two ladies were incessantly employed in providing what was necessary to effect their benevolent purpose. They felt as if the Holmeses were creditors of the good for the wrongs they had endured from the bad; and so generally and liberally were alms diffused to them through the medium of Mrs. Vernon, that their fortunes promised to revive as rapidly as they had before declined.

The only visit the Everards received from Mr. Vavasour, was at the very moment

ment they were quitting their house to attend at the interment. Although the heart of Henry was almost entirely alienated from his former friend, prudence dictated the suppression of his feelings for the present; and he invited him to share their dinner, after the melancholy duty they were about to perform had been fulfilled. Mr. Vavasour readily accepted the invitation, and on learning their intention, proposed meeting them on their return to town, and accompanying them on horseback.

At the cottage they found the Holmeses habited in respectable mourning, and waiting in calm silence the moment when their only present comfort, the contemplation of their beloved daughter's reliques, was for ever to be denied them; while their patience and resignation added more to the mournful interest of the scene, than the most violent ebullitions of grief could have created.

After

After much delay, caused by the distance from town, the procession moved, and at the entrance of the village churchyard was met by the minister, who commenced the sublime and solemn service, which cannot be listened to but with reverence and awe. The unhappy parents never raised their eyes from the ground; and as they arrived at the cemetery, Henry observed that the delay which had occurred had enabled Mr. Vavasour to reach the spot, and that he followed afar off the mournful train.

The evening was mild and calm, and as the officiating minister proceeded in the affecting ceremony of sepulture, the setting sun cast his last beams upon the pale and venerable forehead of the priest, and whose eyes were turned towards that heaven he had so long and faithfully served on earth, pleading with Christian fervour for the departed spirit of her whose remains were consecrated by

by the holy rite. The hearts of all were touched by his pathetic zeal; and as he pronounced the comforting assurance, that "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," in a tone of tempered triumph, even the grief of the father yielded to the truth, and he raised his head in witness of his sincere belief in the sacred word. The moment after, his gaze seemed wildly fixed on some object of dread and horror; his frame trembled with excessive agitation; and ere Henry and the major could render him assistance, he fell senseless by the grave. The service was for the moment interrupted; but as he revived, he pointed with averted looks to the spot which had before attracted his regard, frantickly exclaiming—"Begone! begone!—spare us!—at this moment spare us!—wretch! —murderer!"

They turned to see what could thus have affected him; but nothing to justify

tify his transport appeared; and even Mr. Vavasour had left the place, as the sound of his horse's feet were heard at a distance, as he galloped quickly from the spot.

The ceremony was concluded; and as on his return the old man preserved profound silence on the subject, there could be little doubt that his imagination had been momentarily affected by his grief. The exhortations of the clergyman had the beneficial effect of calming his emotions, while to his counsel to struggle against the violence of his feelings, Holmes replied—"I am not superstitious, yet my senses were affected by the seeming appearance of the assassin of my child, gazing with an unnatural expression of horror on the coffin-plate that recorded her name and years. Although reason refuses to explain the circumstance, the impression on my mind was that of reality. I saw the fluctuation

tion of his features—his look of remorse and dread. As he came, he vanished; but to my disordered fancy, he was nevertheless fully apparent."

This circumstance occupied their attention as they returned to town.—"The grief of Holmes," said Henry, "must have affected his brain at the time."

"I see nothing in what he represents," observed the major, "which might not have actually occurred, and even probably did take place."

"Do you mean," said Mrs. Vernon, half frighted, "that a spirit interfered on the occasion?"

"Not at all," he replied; "I see not the impossibility of the author of the ruin of that unhappy family being present upon the ground."

"He could not be with the mourners," she answered.

"Intentionally not, perhaps."

"He

"He could not have left the cottage with us."

"True; but he might have arrived subsequently."

"Really one would suppose your imagination affected also," said Mrs. Vernon, "or you delight to frighten us; but the fact was, that any stranger present at the moment, I must have seen, as my attention was aroused by Mr. Vavasour's quitting my side hastily; and I can assure you no person whom I had not previously beheld was near us."

"What you state," answered the major, "may be undoubtedly true, and yet I may not be incorrect."

"You are certainly in a puzzling temper," said Henry; "if there were no stranger but Mr.——"

A look from the major prevented his concluding the sentence; and they pursued their way home in silence, where they

they dined, but unattended by their expected guest.

The day of the intended masquerade had arrived, without Mr. Marmaduke Vavasour having made his appearance at the Everards or general Montrose's; but a note was received by the latter, wherein he excused himself from being present on the occasion, on the plea of illness. Mrs. Everard felt highly gratified, that as her husband could not be present, they would be unattended by one whose presence would have given her pain.

Mrs. Vernon, whose taste was decidedly in favour of shining in a sentimental character, was delighted as the moment destined for exhibition approached, and amused her friend during the morning by a rehearsal of her intended performance: Crazy Jane—Mary the Maid of the Inn—the Maid of the Haystack—Fair Rosamond—Inez de Castro—

Castro—the beautiful Cenci—and every female character marked by misfortune in history or romance, had been balanced in her mind; but after various trials, finding that they all demanded more of action and speech in their representation than nature had qualified her fitly to bestow upon them, the whole race of unfortunate damsels was abandoned, for the lighter and less irksome garb of a Sicilian peasant. The graceful costume of that land of beauty had been happily adopted, as the young widow's enchanting appearance might have rivalled the fairest of the daughters of Catania.

Mrs. Everard had assumed the sober habiliment of a nun, hoping in that commonplace choice to escape observation, and the necessity of taking any active share in the amusements of the evening. The general was habited as a Castilian; while major Montrose had adopted the dress of an Arab chieftain.

With

With whatever hesitation Mrs. Everard had acceded to the invitation, and however little she seemed calculated, in the absence of her husband, to enjoy the entertainment, yet the brilliant appearance which the house presented, at once astonished and delighted her. The variety of costume by which she was surrounded—the unusual tone of voice produced by the masks—and the motley and contrasted groupes that moved in every direction, afforded her equal wonder and amusement.

However Englishmen may be inclined to claim a title to a greater share of humour than their neighbours, it consists rather in the delineation than the assumption of character—in a quick susceptibility of absurdity or inconsistency, rather than in identifying the extravagancies of folly. Their epigrammatic wit and laconic sarcasm are momentary flashes, throwing into light all that is

trivial or ridiculous; but they fail in the mimicry of folly, and scorning to labour in the service of mirth, soon tire in its pursuit. A masquerade is consequently calculated at the first moment to produce a favourable effect; but there is no existing species of entertainment wherein the materials for its maintenance are so early exhausted, and wherein fatigue and weariness so quickly ensue.

The incongruity of association in the masks was not the least amusing part of the scene—a copier of Satan and a reverend friar—a portly landlady and a French abbé—had linked themselves together; while a son of Neptune, still on his favourite element, or "half seas over," staggered by the side of a princely cardinal; the pope himself was in pursuit of an airy opera-dancer; while a Jew and a Quakeress were whispering in a corner; and a butcher had actually gone on

on his knees to a stately and acquiescent Minerva.

After mixing with the gay and clamorous multitude for some time, Mrs. Everard felt wearied by the intense attention which the diversity of figures, their dresses and actions, had excited; and they sought a quiet seat, where they might freely observe the varied movements of the crowd, without being exposed to importunity.

Shortly after they had been placed, Mrs. Everard perceived two masks at some distance, who were in earnest discourse, and whose regards were intently fixed upon her party. One was clothed in armour, and from his attributes, was evidently the representative of the knight of La Mancha, while his companion was a female clothed as a gipsy; but their thoughts were seemingly little occupied at the time by the characters

they had assumed. Struck by the interest they seemed to take in her or her friends, Mrs. Everard pointed them out to the major; but on perceiving themselves in turn objects of scrutiny, the hero of Cervantes abruptly quitted his partner, and was soon lost in the throng of masks.

The gipsy paused for a moment, but at length approached the party, where she stood in silent contemplation of Mrs. Everard, until the position of the latter became painful, from the rude attention to which she was thus subjected.

"What wouldst thou, daughter of old Nile?" demanded the major.

"The accomplishment of what my art enables me to foresee."

"And what is that?"

"Vengeance full and complete, as my almost insatiable desires might demand."

"My

"My arm shall be thy help—mark him the way he must pursue to redress thy wrongs."

"I ask not help—my science gives me power o'er that which is, and is to come: reserve your charity where it will be soon required—to aid your friends."

"Of whom dost thou complain?"

"Of no one—ere I complain I strike; redress is my only argument; and there are, who, if possessed of my faculty in scanning their few spare hours of happiness, would sink at the prospect of the ruin that awaits them, and wish the grave to shroud them from their certain fate."

"You know not whom you address," observed the major, struck by the impassioned tone in which she spoke; "you are in error here."

"Where then," she replied, "were the gifted knowledge that I boast? where that prescience your mummery could defeat?"

"Give proof then of your skill, and meaning to your words."

"My meaning will be in the proof; ere long, and you shall be enlightened, to your shame and sorrow—when precaution be no more, and my revenge fulfilled."

"Let us remove," said Mrs. Vernon, half distressed at the rhapsody she had listened to; "let us change our place."

They arose to depart, and as Mrs. Everard passed the gipsy, the latter seized her arm, and in an under-voice, addressed her—"Your fate is sure; misery is your portion, and disgrace—inevitable disgrace and ruin, attend all who bear the name of Everard!"

Shocked to the greatest degree, Mrs. Everard fell back, nearly fainting, on the seat she had just quitted, while the major rushed forward, to discover and detain the person who had thus alarmed her; but ere he could penetrate the troops

troops of masks, she was beyond his reach, and his search proved vain and ineffectual.

When major Montrose returned to his party, he found Mrs. Everard addressed by a Don Quixote, who, after a bombastic speech, knelt at her feet, and, in expressing himself in terms of adoration towards the pretended nun, seized her hand, and pressed it passionately to his heart.

"For Heaven's sake," she said, as the major approached, "interfere to save me from this persecution!"

The hero of La Mancha was soon obliged to resign his hold, but with reluctance, and turning towards the major, expressed his anger at his intervention. —"Presumptuous infidel, desist!" he said, "nor dare again pollute the flower of Christian chivalry with thine unhallowed touch, or I shall make thee flee

before my lance, as night's dark vapours vanish before the beam of day.—Thy beauty's splendour," he continued, accosting Mrs. Everard anew, "no disguise can hide, and true love's eyes can pierce religion's veil."

"You are in error, sir; I pray you leave me; you know me not—indeed you do not!" she exclaimed.

"Not know you, goddess of my knightly worship! By this fair hand I swear——" But his speech was suddenly arrested by a touch from the flat side of the Arab's sabre, as he advanced his hand to seize again that of Mrs. Everard. Rising in real or assumed anger, and couching his lance with more energy than the major expected—"Slave, to thy guard!" he cried, and was on the point of using the weapon with violence, when the major, whose temper had been roused by the occurrences of the evening, furiously exclaimed—"By Heaven, if you dare to touch

touch me, I will unmask you on the spot, and punish you severely!"

A crowd having assembled around them at this discourse, whether from fear of exposure, or the dread of chastisement, "the flower of chivalry" rapidly retired; and as his opponent's object was solely the protection of Mrs. Everard, he forbore to pursue him.

The theatre had now become completely filled, and the alarm and persecution she had endured, added to the heat, the brilliancy of illumination, and the noise that prevailed, had nearly overcome the spirits of Mrs. Everard; but as those of Mrs. Vernon had not diminished, and she still enjoyed the busy scene, the former dared not propose to quit the house; she therefore entreated the party to permit her to rest herself in one of the small chambers, which had been deserted for the more

inviting retreat of the boxes by the company, and which, although imperfectly lighted, was quiet and undisturbed, and more cool than any other situation. To the offer of her friends to return home, she put a decided negative, and even would not permit them to remain with her, but insisted on their returning to partake of the entertainment, which was now at its height, as the room wherein she sat was not distant from the company, and a waiter or attendant was in view. Promising merely to make another round, for the last time, by the persuasion of Mrs. Everard, they left her for the moment.

On their return, the company had so much increased in numbers, that it was with difficulty they could procure a passage, and at every step they were impeded by the throngs assembled. The heat was now insupportable, and many females were hastily withdrawn, whom

whom the pressure had alarmed, or whom the warmth had overcome. Their way was for a moment opposed by a mask, who bore a lady that struggled, apparently in convulsions, although she was closely wrapped up in a cloak, and the person who bore her in an agitated manner begged earnestly that a passage might be cleared for them. The major, in doing so, offered to aid in the support of the female, and made a movement to that effect; but the man who held her in his arms levelled at him a violent blow, which falling on his chest, for an instant stunned him. Ere he had recovered his recollection, a voice sounded in his ear—"Vengeance!"—It was that of the gipsy. Rushing after his assailant, as soon as he was enabled, he had nearly reached a coach at the door, into which he saw him enter, having already deposited his charge within, when the vehicle drove off with fury,

and was in a moment too distant for pursuit.

Indignant at the insult he had received, and the evasion of its atonement, he hastened to return to the general, whom he found on the spot where he had quitted them, and who, with Mrs. Vernon, expressed their anxiety to quit the theatre; and resorting to the apartment where Mrs. Everard had retired, they found it empty, and the lights extinguished. Alarmed at the circumstance, they searched amongst those in the vicinity to recognize her, but in vain; and concluding, or rather hoping, that, uneasy at their delay, she had gone in their search, the major hastened to seek her, while the general and Mrs. Vernon remained in a conspicuous situation, whence they might be observed by her, should she be in their pursuit.

Having made the tour of every place accessible

accessible to masks, the major returned unsuccessful. Still he gave not up hopes of discovering her; but the time wore away without the slightest trace of her they sought; and amidst their fears, their expectation flattered them with her having had recourse to some of the attendants to procure her a coach, and having driven home.

Improbable as was the idea, Mrs. Vernon cherished it, and she instantly proposed to depart with the general for the house of their friend; while the major deemed it right to await at the theatre the intelligence of the result of their inquiry, as accident might still afford him there some indications of Mrs. Everard.

When the general and Mrs. Vernon had departed, major Montrose strove also to persuade himself that Mrs. Everard had returned home. If she had not done so, her disappearance was of a most

most mysterious nature, and fraud or violence must have been practised towards her; and the words of the gipsy awakened fears in his breast for her safety. The rooms were fast clearing of their company; as he wandered about agitated, his steps led him once more to the chamber whence she had disappeared, near the door of which a lad, apparently employed as an assistant, was waiting.

"Have you been long here, friend?" demanded the major.

"No," he replied, "I have other stations, but I have been off and on during the night."

"You are employed here then?"

"Ay, to be sure, for the 'casion; a half a crown isn't to be sneezed at. As aunty supplies masks and rattletraps for the theatre, she contrives to get me hired now and then as a waiter."

"Did you see any person in this room

room during the evening?—a lady?—a mask?"

"Why, as to that, ax me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies."

"What do you mean?"

"Why then, slap dab, you must know my honour's consarned to keep my tongue between my teeth—that's all."

"Your honour!"

"Ay, to be sure; when some folks come down with the stumpy not to blab, it wouldn't be fair to peach, you know."

"All that I can comprehend is, that you have been paid to keep a secret. Answer me plainly and directly, and I will double the sum you have received; if not, by Heaven——"

"You needn't come for to go to put yourself in a passion; a nod's as good as a wink. If I arn't out, you are major Mun—Munrose, I guess?"

"You are right. How do you know me? But quickly!—the lady? Here's the money."

"Ay,

"Ay, now that's genteel like; and as you tips us the dibs, why I'll tell you all I know about the job. So you see, as I comes in here, I sees a lady all mollycolly like upon that ere sofy; so I says nothing, but goes about snuffing the candles, when in pops a man, decked out like the man in armour at the lord mayor's show; and then up he goes, and claps his arm very coolly round madam's waist. Thinks I, that's a rum go; but, as she didn't seem to mind it, says I——"

"How was she dressed?"

"Why, like a papish nun, as they call it. So, as I was a saying, says he—'Now is the time, my love—lose not a moment; all is ready;' and with that he whips out a bundle from under the sofy, and in the twinkling of a bedpost covers her head and ears in a big cloak, and wraps himself in another. Then says he—'Be quick, my dear.' Then, seeing as how I was there, he claps a yellow

yellow boy in my fist, and says—'My lad, you must be secret.'—'Lord,' says I, 'trust Nat Davis for——"

"Curse your answers!—proceed."

"There you go it again! you frighten all my 'deas. Well, says she—'But how shall we escape?'—'That is provided for,' says he; so out he twigs a key, claps it in the door——"

"What door?"

"Oh, you arn't up to snuff; this here," said the lad, pointing to one, which, being covered with paper resembling that of the room, could with difficulty be distinguished. "How do you think the signoras and ma'amselles as sing and dance could——"

"Where does it lead to?"

"Why to the lane behind, to be sure. So, as soon as they were ready, he claps her claw under his, and off they goes, laughing for dear life."

"Impossible! Damn her!"

"Why, just as you likes about that. But,

But, as I was saying, as soon as they were out, I tries to follow, to see their shines; but the tall chap wasn't to be diddled, for he turns the key on the other side. Now I'll let you into a bit of my thoughts."

"Confound your thoughts!—proceed."

"Why, what's the use of cursing and swearing in that ere way? Why, I have told you all, hasn't I? What more would you have?"

"But how did you know my name?"

"Ay, I forgot: that ere's a rigmarole. Why, you see, as she was slipping on her dabs, she says—'They'll soon be here, and if major Munrose comes——'—'Oh ho,' says I, 'I smells a rat,' and guessed as how you were nicely diddled."

"Nat—Nat Davis, where are you? you little Jew varlet!—Nat, I say!" at this moment exclaimed a female without.

"By

"By jingo, there's aunty, in one of her vagaries; so I must make myself scarce in a giffey."

Major Montrose remained thunderstruck at the intelligence he had gained, although it militated against all he had observed in Mrs. Everard: the tale was clear and unequivocal. As the lad was quitting the room he stopped him.—"But who was the man—the mask?"

"I'm not up to that. He knows you, however; for he says—'If I wasn't afraid of exposure, I should have settled that major Munrose!' Then he stampt with his foot just here, where you stand. Why, I say, here's a prize, by jingo!"

The lad stooped at the moment, and took something from the ground, which the major immediately seized, as also a piece of paper, that lay upon the same spot, but which the obscurity prevented his before perceiving.

At

At this instant a large elderly woman entered the room, and springing upon the lad, like a tigress on her prey, made a manual appeal to his auricular organs, which produced a plaint as loud as unmelodious.

"You little Jewish rapscallion, here's every body off, and I has been waiting the Lord knows how long; and you caterwauling here with that outlandish figure, you impudent little Israelite you!"

"Why, I was waiting for a share of the prize I found; but as you don't like it, you may lump it," he answered, sulkily.

"And why couldn't you say so, you good-for-nothing varlet! instead of making me roar my voice to shivers? If the gemmun's a gemmun, I dare say he would be above taking advantage of poor people."

The

The major only replied by emptying the contents of his purse into the outstretched hand of the woman. He then hastened to peruse the paper, when, recollecting the necessity of learning where the fugitives might be found, he turned to inquire, but found himself alone.

The painful task now devolved upon him of seeking his unfortunate friend; and on crossing the stage, his attention was attracted by a person passing with hasty steps, in whom he recognized Everard.

Mr. Everard had been so long detained by duty on the evening of the masquerade, that it was past midnight ere he regained his habitation, where, on his arrival, he found his old man-servant in a state of alarm and distress. The latter stated, that as soon as it was dusk, and Mrs. Everard had departed for the general's, a hackney-coach had driven to the

the door, in which, without explanation, Mrs. Edwards had deposited her effects, that had been prepared for the occasion, and then left the house, merely informing the domestic that it was not her intention to return. As well as his years permitted, he had pursued the vehicle, which had taken the direction of Westminster bridge, and as it stopped for a moment on the other side, had nearly attained his object; but as he drew near, it drove rapidly away, after having admitted a man as the companion of Edwards.—" The person," continued the old man, " had the air of a gentleman, although certainly disguised by a humble dress; and I could almost have sworn it was Mr. Vavasour; but as he carefully avoided being known, I cannot be positive."

Henry was alarmed and mortified at this incident, as although he had resolved to discharge Edwards from his service

vice within a few days, yet her abrupt departure denoted the execution of the plan which he had hitherto vainly attempted to develop. As the servant followed with lights into the drawing-room, Henry inquired whether he had had any presentiment of her flight?

"It is not for me," he replied, "as your honour well knows, to meddle with the concerns of the family, more than belongs to my station; but as you have put the question, I must say I have not been content of late with the goings on in this house: I may be wrong, but I fear Mrs. Edwards was no better than she should be."

"Of that I am now too well aware," said Mr. Everard; "and it was my intention to have dismissed her directly."

"Hem!—I wish—if I may be so bold as to say it, sir—I wish it had been done before this."

"Why so?"

"To

"To speak honestly—I fear there has been some plot carrying on against your honour."

"Against me! Speak, and tell me all you know."

"As you are pleased to command me, sir, I must say, that there have been meetings, and whisperings, and signs, between her and Mr. Vavasour, as whenever he left the house, she always followed him to the door, where they always discoursed in an under voice; and I have heard them frequently name my mistress."

"Did you hear their words at any time?"

"The last time he was here, I heard him say, as I went up stairs—'Edwards, it will do; I shall gain the prize; all will be ready;' but I cannot say that they alluded to my mistress, although, shortly after, I heard them use her name. I fear to offend your honour, but——"

"Proceed—speak freely."

"Then,

"Then, sir, I have been obliged of late to put her down on many occasions, when she mentioned my lady, as she did it with so little respect, that I threatened to inform you of it, and then she would be quiet."

"What did she say?"

"I would not dare, without your order, to tell you, sir, as I did not much mind her words; but she said, that few persons would leave their wives so often alone with a gentleman as you did; and that she wouldn't be astonished if they profited by the indulgence."

"The wretch!—Do you know more?"

"Why, I have reason to believe, sir, she has been often at Mr. Vavasour's; and she has lately had several visitors here, who also, from what I could catch, were linked with that gentleman: then, they were always anxious to avoid speaking when I was present; but the little they then said, proved they were

any thing but decent or respectable people."

"I am obliged to you, Fritz: you may now leave me; but have the goodness not to communicate to any other person what you have mentioned to me to-night."

Henry was startled at what he had just heard, and the more he reflected on the subject, painful doubts would take possession of his mind; and for the first time dark suspicions were excited, which he could not readily dispel. Circumstances banished from his thoughts, revived with redoubled force to torture and afflict him; and although he strove to resist the images which his fancy created, yet his agitated feelings failed in every effort to tranquillize his mind. The confusion of Mr. Everard at the opera, as he entered the box, and found her alone with Mr. Vavasour—his frequent visits to her during his absence—

his

his having left his house at a late hour, when his return was unexpected—and a thousand occurrences, deemed trifles at the moment, became confirmations to his fears, and, for the time, were calculated to excite sensations of the most agonizing nature. As the first impression in some degree wore off, and as his agitation a little subsided, his better nature revolted at any idea injurious to the affection, the delicacy, and honour, of her whom he adored, and venting imprecations on the wretches who had evidently planned the destruction of his happiness, and with the determination to expose, without delay, their artifice and guilt, he retired, to seek the rest which the fatigue he had undergone during the day demanded.

On entering his bedroom, he was struck by a note that lay on his dressing-table, and taking it up, read as follows:—

"To the name of Everard I have sworn vengeance; why, you may hereafter learn. Long have I awaited the occasion, and my patience has been rewarded. My mistress commands, and I obey her, in quitting your roof. Would you know more, the cabinet will tell it you.

"E. EDWARDS."

"The wretch must be deranged!" said Henry to himself: "the cabinet!—I know of none;" but at the same moment his wife's jewel-case met his eye, and remembering that it had been so termed by his housekeeper, he mechanically resorted to it. It was, however, locked, and being strongly fastened, resisted all his efforts, until overcome by impatience, he succeeded in forcing it open. To his astonishment, it was wholly empty, and not the slightest vestige of its usual valuable contents remained.

mained. The drawers were equally void, but in one a piece of paper attracted his attention: it was in the handwriting of Mr. Vavasour, and scarcely dared he commence its perusal:

"The arrangement we have made is complete. I shall refrain from seeing you until the moment destined to put me in possession of all that's dear on earth arrives. The masquerade will terminate our anxiety, my beloved Jane. Edwards has her instructions, and will be faithful. Fear not, my love, and success is certain.

"M. V."

CHAPTER VIII.

I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.
Childe Harold, Canto IV.

The Duel.

DEATH, in its most fearful shape, would have been mercy to the wretched husband, as the dreadful record of his misery was laid open. With no gradation of doubt to temper the violence of the blow, the shock caused by the infidelity of her whom he had ever deemed pure and faultless, came unqualified and unmitigated, and his mental and physical faculties were suddenly paralyzed and un-

unstrung. His wild and fearful gaze was directed to the letter, which had fallen from his hand, as one enchanted by the serpent eye feels all the horror of his state, yet stands enchained and powerless beneath the deadly influence of the fatal charm. The abrupt disclosure of his aggregated miseries—her whom his heart had long adored, disgraced, polluted, an adulteress—her innocence destroyed—her honour stained—her purity blasted—her character levelled to the dust; himself husbandless and alone —widowed in heart, and mind, and hope—his babe motherless and forsaken —the bright promises of futurity, the joys of present existence, fled never to return, rushed at once upon his mind. His eye became fixed—his brain on fire —his limbs rigid; and when he at length partially revived to sense, he found himself supported by his old and faithful servant, who had raised him from the ground.

As reason gradually returned, the horror of his situation filled his breast; and it was not until the servant thought of placing his deserted infant in his arms, that a flood of tears relieved his depressed heart. Starting from his seat, he recollected that it might not yet be too late to save the wretched being to whom he was allied, from shame, ruin, and dishonour; and he was on the point of quitting the apartment, as a carriage stopped at his door.

A revulsion took place in his feelings —hope sprang to his breast—" It is false!" he passionately exclaimed; " thank God! it is false, and she is here!"

As he reached the staircase, he paused, and listened. The step of one person alone was heard—it was a man's—and slowly and heavily it came. A voice was now distinct—it was not hers; and as the inquiries made of the servant terminated,

minated, its tone was sorrowful and subdued.

Trembling beneath renewed fears, Henry was scarcely enabled to reach the room, which general Montrose had entered. The expression of his countenance at once informed him of his fate, and placing in the general's hand the fatal letter, he fell back exhausted upon a seat.

To the few and brief demands of Henry, the general's answers were sufficient anew to extinguish hope; and seizing his hat, he rushed franticly from the house, ere his friend or the servant could follow him.

The morning was cold, dark, and cheerless, as he directed his unsteady steps towards the theatre. The house was nearly dark, and he wandered long through its intricate and now dreary

passages, until he reached the stage, where he was recognized by major Montrose.

"Montrose!" he exclaimed, in a voice feeble from excessive emotion, as he laid his trembling hand upon the arm of his friend; "Montrose! have I at length found you? Come with me quickly!—aid me to revenge!—my head is bursting! Adulteress!—infernal seducer!—Oh God! my very heart is crushed!"

"Be calm, I pray you," said the major; "be patient yet a moment!"

"Say then that it is false!—give me but hope!—say that she is mine! Fool that I am to hope for ought but vengeance—vengeance to the full!—*You* will not desert me?"

"Indeed I shall not," answered the major; "but let me conduct you from this place."

"Where you will," replied Henry; "only

"only let us hasten to the one object I have now in view. Let us lose not a moment! time presses, and I fear the chain of life may break, ere my arm has secured revenge."

"On whom?" demanded his friend.

"Perdition blast the wretch! the villain Vavasour!"

The major led the unhappy man from the theatre; and placing him in a coach, they drove to his house.

The force of the shock he had sustained had, at length, the effect which attends all violent excitation, of exhausting his spirits; and nature, overpowered by the severe struggles it had been fated to endure, became at length comparatively insensible, dull, and unresisting. In this state he was enabled to unfold the occurrences of the evening, as derived from the information of his servant,

the flight of Edwards, and the discovery of the letter.

When he had terminated his recital, the major deemed it better to relate what he had learned at the theatre; and, as he expected, the effect was unimportant, after the conviction of his unhappiness was complete.

The paper found at the theatre was in the handwriting of Edwards, and would seem to have been delivered to Mrs. Everard, after her arrival at the masquerade, as it intimated that the former had succeeded in leaving the house, as directed by her mistress, and that all was prepared for her reception at the proposed place of concealment; but it threw no light on the direction taken by the guilty female.

"God only knows," said Henry, "how little I have merited this visitation! were

were her eyes closed in death, but in a death shameless and unembittered by previous infamy, I could be content. Who could have thought, that while she clasped me in her arms but yesterday, with more than bridal love, that I then pressed a serpent to my bosom—that I held in my embrace the willing victim of a foul seducer—that without a sigh she could abandon her unoffending babe, and add mockery to my dishonour and my child's shame—abandoned traitress! But I must not pause; punishment must be brought upon the villain's head! Revenge is all that is left me now to do—that over, the hereafter shall be thought of: you must bear my message."

"I cannot refuse," answered the major; and the arrangement was accordingly made, to demand immediate atonement of the seducer—and, should he be met with, the same morning fixed for their meeting; while Henry agreed to be

be ready, at the major's return, to accompany him to such spot as should be decided upon, although neither expected to find their enemy at his post.

It was yet dark when major Montrose arrived at the Temple; but on knocking, and announcing his name, he was instantly ushered into the presence of Mr. Vavasour, who seemed prepared for the visit, as a gentleman was also present when he entered.

On his being offered a seat, major Montrose answered—"My business, sir, will dispense with ceremony; and its nature you can have little difficulty in anticipating."

"I am prepared to hear it," coldly replied Mr. Vavasour.

"The events of this night, in consummating the misery of my friend, Mr. Everard, oblige him to demand of the author of his unmerited misfortune, the

the only atonement now left him to bestow; but ere I proceed to complete the purpose of my visit here, I would yield to the influence of those feelings by which I am swayed, as his friend—as the friend of the hapless woman, who, seduced by the arts of a——"

"You may spare any epithet," observed Mr. Vavasour, "which does not belong to your mission; nor can explanation on my part, or any injurious observation on yours, be at all necessary, as your intent has been clearly announced. I beg therefore, ere I quit you, as my presence cannot be essential, to introduce Mr. Greville, who will make such arrangements as are necessary, and to whose conduct I entrust the affair you have in hand."

As he reached the door to leave them, the major could not resist the impulse of his better feelings, and relinquishing the tone he had assumed, exclaimed—

"One

"One moment—one word, I beg, Mr. Vavasour!"

The latter having unwillingly returned, he proceeded—"My observations, I admit, should be confined to the office I have undertaken; but my relation with the unhappy parties from whom it has taken rise—my former acquaintance with yourself—permit me to go beyond it. Let me address you as man to man, and for an instant give me your attention. If one spark of human pity can be excited—if a trait of honest feeling be your attribute—if you have not banished from your heart manly generosity or Christian charity, let me supplicate—let me entreat you, by all you hold most dear here and hereafter, to repair, as far as it be possible, and ere it be too late, the ruin you have effected. Refrain, while it is yet time, from the pursuit of the fatal scheme you have adopted; and if the picture of the heart-broken husband, writhing beneath his aggravated sufferings,

ings, cannot affect you—if the peace you have destroyed—the confidence and friendship you have betrayed—the home you have rendered desolate, cannot touch you, yet let the fate of that wretched woman arrest your purposes; reflect upon the purity, hitherto immaculate, which you have stained—the shame and ignominy to which you have devoted her—the child on whom you have conferred the inheritance of bitterness and sorrow; by the value you place on your name, your honour, and your family, spare the fallen creature you have humbled—restore her, if not to her family, yet to her friends; be satisfied with the magnitude of your offence, and——"

"To recall what is past is now too late," Vavasour said, interrupting him angrily; "she is voluntarily under my protection, and all the fiends of hell shall not induce me to resign her."

He was again quitting the chamber, when Mr. Greville, in his turn, arrested him.—

him.—"Vavasour," he said, "you have deceived me—in the nicest point deceived me. I knew not Mr. Everard had been your friend: this is a black business, and let me join this gentleman——"

"I will hear no more!" furiously exclaimed Vavasour. "Fulfil your promise or not, as you desire; but words are now idle; I have leapt the precipice, and must on. Is it your intention to retract your word?"

"I shall not certainly," said his friend; "but it is with a heavy heart I consent to its observance."

"Enough," ejaculated the other, as he rushed out of the room.

"I shall not certainly retract," continued Mr. Greville, addressing the major. "He was the friend of my boyhood, and I am interested by what you have stated. Another cannot influence him as I may be able to do: my mediation may yet be serviceable in some point, and

and I will therefore adhere to my promise, although God only knows with what sorrow."

It was then agreed between the gentlemen, that in an hour's time the meeting should have place at Chalk Farm; and the major returned to Mr. Everard, who had been in the mean time occupied with the few preparations requisite for the occasion, and they directly adjourned to the appointed spot. They there found Mr. Vavasour already in attendance, with his second; and the usual preliminaries having been gone through, it was agreed that the parties should fire together at a given signal. At the first fire Mr. Everard's ball missed his antagonist, while he received a slight wound in the arm. Mr. Greville now advanced, to attempt a termination of hostilities, but he was silenced by an impatient look and gesture of his principal, as he seized with eagerness a second pistol. The ground

ground was again taken: Henry at the second fire was uninjured, but his opponent fell dead upon the spot.

Stung to his heart's core by the wrongs so profusely heaped upon him, Mr. Everard could not repress a feeling of horror, as he viewed the features of him who had been alternately his friend and foe, fixed in death, but retaining that fierce and savage wildness of expression, which they bore as he took the last weapon from his second. He had passed to his account, in the very acme of his crimes; and to a mis-spent life had succeeded a lawless and self-sought death. For himself, Henry had been educated in habits of piety, which his profession had not affected; and to his religious principles he had strictly adhered. However the world might varnish, with the flattering unction of its approbation, this fearful act, as it considered his accumulated injuries, his conscience proclaimed

claimed to him, that the deed was recorded by a superior power against his soul; he felt that he had expedited a sinner from guilt to eternity; that his wrongs were not diminished, or his feelings soothed; but that revenge had armed his hand, and the blood of man had been shed to his curse. The unexpected shock, which has been said to divert derangement by its force, and to restore, in many cases, perverted reason by an instantaneous effect, fell at this moment on the mind of Henry, and with an opposite effect, the tone of his spirit became for ever altered; its influence upon his future character was decisive; and he left the field, as changed in disposition as if a century of events had operated progressively on its reform.

For the first moment since the overwhelming events of the night had commenced, could he look around him; and as he witnessed the perfection of the

the satisfaction he had contemplated, he paused like the stricken deer, to contemplate from its covert the extended course over which it had been driven with furious speed. Behind, all was dark and perilous; before him, the prospect was bare, and bleak, and desolate. As he held the smoking weapon in his hand over the breathless corpse, he felt "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue." The scheme of licentiousness and lust had been frustrated: the infamy of the seducer and seduced had been attained, without its projected reward. One had been precipitated from the height to which innocence and virtue had elevated her, and now grovelled in the dust, vilest of the vile. He stood a violator of his country's laws—an usurper of the prerogative of the Divinity, at whose fearful bar the author of his wrongs was placed on his arraignment.

His

His friends tore him from the fatal spot, and for obvious reasons it was determined he should not be conducted to his house, but seek a temporary shelter in the apartments of Mr. Greville, to avoid, for the moment, the pursuit of the ministers of justice.

In the evening of the same day, the major was enabled to see Henry, and in some degree consoled him by intelligence of his child's health; but all the inquiries of the general respecting Mrs. Everard had been fruitless, while those of Mr. Greville on the same subject, at the chambers of Mr. Vavasour, had been equally unsuccessful.

The servant of the deceased, who bore a good character, could afford no clue to her retreat, and merely knew that Mrs. Edwards had been in the habit of visiting his master frequently of late, with other persons, and that they were all

all connected in the execution of some plan, of which he was kept in ignorance; that one of the persons alluded to kept a shop in a small street in the neighbourhood; and on receiving the direction, Henry was surprised to find that it was the same with that presented him formerly by his associate in the mail-coach. He also learned, that the body of Mr. Vavasour had been borne to his chambers, where a coroner's inquest had been summoned, and the verdict would be known in the course of the evening, As it was uncertain what might be the result of the inquiry, the major proposed, should it be unfavourable, that Henry should quit his present retreat, to avoid the consequences; and suggested, that until the storm had blown over, shelter should be sought beneath the roof of poor Holmes, upon whose attention he had so great a claim; and who had, by his influence, been provided with a small, but neat house,

at

at Westminster, to which suspicion was not likely to attach. The major, having received his friend's assent to the proposition, departed to make the necessary preparations, promising to return the same night; while Mr. Greville also proceeded to ascertain the decision of the jury, on the subject of the deceased.

The coroner having entered upon his functions, the only witnesses produced relative to the event of the morning, was the domestic of Mr. Vavasour, and the coachman who had driven Henry and his friends to the Temple after the meeting. The former was unacquainted even with the name of the major, but recounted, as far as he knew, all that had occurred at his visit: while the latter merely knew that he had been hired by three persons, whom he drove to town.

As none of the precedent or qualify-

ing circumstances attendant upon the unfortunate affair had been communicated to the jury, and as the extraordinary hour of the major's visit—the sudden call upon the deceased—his body found alone and unattended—and three persons having left the spot without any appearance of a second having taken part in the fatal business on the side of Mr. Vavasour, tended to impress upon their minds the idea of unfairness in the whole transaction, a verdict of wilful murder against some unknown person or persons was returned; and orders were directly issued to discover and arrest, as early as possible, those against whom it was directed.

Shortly after the major's return from Holmes's, where his proposition had been readily acceded to, Mr. Greville reentered to communicate the intelligence he had received, and to urge the necessity of Henry's immediately seeking

seeking some more proper place of concealment. As it was past midnight, the major and his friend immediately adopted his advice; and crossing Blackfriars-bridge, to avoid the more public streets, they at length reached the habitation of the Holmeses, who, with the utmost sympathy, participated in his feelings, and shewed all the kindness that might be expected from their grateful dispositions.

When he had retired to his room, the contrast produced in his state within the last twenty-four hours could not but forcibly be felt. From the height of happiness he had fallen into the abyss of despair. Sheltered by strangers, separated from his child, and proscribed by the laws of his country, he turned heart-broken from the dreadful retrospect. To seek refuge in a foreign land, with his daughter, where his moderate income could afford him the honourable

means of support, and to turn for ever from the soil to which the bitterest recollections were attached, was an idea which arose in his mind, while he paced his room; and as the wave-born sufferer grasps eagerly at the floating mast, the more he dwelt upon the plan, the more he cherished it, until it became the sole object of his thoughts; and his determination being once rivetted, he was eager to put it into execution.

On the major's arrival, he communicated to him his resolve; and although his friend opposed, with warmth, the idea of his leaving England, and assured him, that every hour diminished the peril that threatened to result from the event of the duel, (as the history of the infamous transactions that excited it became public), yet, as his determination had not arisen from the dread of the penalty, nor the fear of popular reproach, in which it had originated, but

feelings

feelings to which no argument could be applied, he persisted in his plan; and solicited the major to assist in such preparations as were necessary for the accomplishment of his purpose. With much regret, the latter found himself obliged to accede to Henry's request; and promised, on leaving him, to conduct him to the general's in the evening, to see his child.

Mr. Everard did not refuse the invitation of his hosts to partake of their humble meal, the next day, when Holmes returned from his duties. As they were wholly ignorant of the cause which had induced him to resort to their hospitality, and had too much respect to inquire, little conversation occurred, as Henry's mind was fully occupied with the recent events in which he had borne so great a share; and in Holmes's countenance might be observed the effects of some new and painful

impression, which, although he strove to conceal, could not escape the anxious observation of his affectionate wife.—"What is it with you, John?" she demanded; "what has happened to disturb you? We must bear our griefs patiently, seeing the young, and rich, and noble, are not exempt from sorrow. Our infliction has been mercifully administered at the entrance of the tomb, while his begins at the startingpost of life. You should not add to his mournfulness, but rather endeavour to relieve it."

"Indeed it would be my greatest happiness, could I do so," replied her husband; "but it was not a vain indulgence of now useless remembrances that troubled me; it was, on the contrary, a circumstance of much interest which has occurred this very day."

"What circumstance?" observed his wife; "no new misfortune awaits us."

"No; the intelligence I have gained," he

he answered, "serves to demonstrate the just and unerring dispensations of Providence, in the punishment of the guilty."

"Of whom?" she reiterated. "What is your meaning?"

"That our implacable foe has received the due reward of all his crimes," he said; "that he who caused our ruin, and destroyed the innocence and life of Mary, has fallen by the hand of his fellow-man."

Henry started—"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Mr. Vavasour, sir."

"Was he the person?"

"He was indeed, sir, the enemy who oppressed us: all that I can yet learn is, that he lost his life yesterday morning in a duel, with some person whom he had wronged."

"And I have been your avenger!" exclaimed Henry; "by my hand he

fell—the cause the same—and we are fellow-victims to his villainy."

The surprise of the Holmeses at this information, rendered them some time silent, until it was interrupted by the wife.—" Impossible!" she cried; " it cannot be, that she, the angel who sought us in our distress—to whom we owe so much—the image of truth and virtue, has been the sacrifice!"

The countenance of their guest, and his silence, confirmed the suspicions of the woman.

" Then he has need of all Heaven's mercy!" she said, as Henry retired to give vent to his wounded feelings.

The general and Mrs. Vernon received him in the evening with the warmest kindness; and the former used every argument and persuasion to divert him from the intent of leaving England.

The

The explanation of the causes that had led to the death of Mr. Vavasour had cast such merited stigma on his memory, that every idea of proceeding against Henry had been abandoned; but although sensible of the friendly motives which urged the general, in his endeavour to dissuade him from his purpose of abandoning his native land, he remained firm in his determination. When the little Julia was introduced, Henry was violently affected, as he regarded the image of her on whom he had so long doated, and her incessant inquiries respecting her mother, so much disturbed him, that Mrs. Vernon was under the necessity of removing her from the chamber.

The general insisted, that as all danger was past, Henry should take up his abode where he then was; and as his home would only tend to revive afflicting recollections, he assented to the proposition;

position; and his old servant was dispatched thither, to bring what was requisite for his use.

When the major entered, he informed Henry, that should he still persist in the resolution he had announced, his commission in the army could be instantly disposed of; and that his case had excited such general sympathy, that every difficulty would be removed, and that any arrangement he should adopt would be readily promoted; and the major zealously offered, as far as in him lay, to be of service to him.

"I shall certainly," replied Henry, "retire to some part of the continent, perhaps for the remainder of my life, but certainly for some years. The time may arrive, when this country will present features more agreeable to me than it now does; and it is only by abandoning it, at present, that I can hope hereafter

after to return with pleasure to its shores. Of you I would ask the favour of superintending the little property I shall leave, and remitting the produce to my agents. I shall bear with me the only being to whom it is now permitted me to be attached. From my family I have long been separated; they have treated me with the greatest unkindness, but I heartily forgive them." He paused for some time, as if struggling with his feelings; and in a low tone and hurried manner, at length continued—"There is one of whom I must now speak, and for the last time. The change operated in me, by the events of which she has been the mover, is as sudden as it is vital; and the effect upon my heart and mind, on my temper and character, is not inferior to the cause by which it has been produced. On losing sight of my native shores, I shall bury in oblivion all reference to her; and if I cannot banish the recollection of her, I shall not permit

permit myself, or those who belong to me, to breathe her name, nor shall the ears of my daughter be polluted by the mention of her mother. To us she shall be as the dead; and I have anxiously, earnestly to entreat, that in any communication you may hereafter make me, she shall not be spoken of. Should she, however, not be so wholly abandoned, but that the consequences of her crime may bring remorse or induce penitence, then, and then only, I would pray you (without reference to me), to seek her out, to provide her with the means of returning to her family in America, and of affording her protection against further misfortune. For that purpose I shall leave one third of my income at your disposal; and it will be sufficient to state, by my agent, that it has been demanded, without the necessity of stating its application. In the event of my decease, a sum, competent to her support, shall be secured. In thus

thus according to her who bears my name, and to the mother of my child, all required to avert want, and to secure maintenance, it is upon the solemn and irrevocable condition, that she never intrudes on me, my child, or family, as from that moment, even the consideration I now evince, shall be withdrawn, and the added resentment of an injured husband be her portion. As by the rule of our communion, the sacrament of marriage can only be dissolved by the head of the church, I shall not seek its revocation, save in the unlikely event of the title vested in my family descending upon me. I need say no more."

"I would have hesitated in coming to any resolution for the present," said the major.

"The proofs are manifold and clear, and human judgment cannot require more decisive evidence of guilt," answered Henry.

"They appear so, I admit," continued the

the major, "but we are all fallible; they emanate from an arch-villain, old in deceit, and whose life was devoted to pernicious arts. I will frankly declare, that, notwithstanding the violent indication to the contrary, something whispers me, that she is not guilty to the extent they represent."

"I respect your doubts, Montrose," said Henry, "but in her offence there is no gradation; whatever extenuating circumstances might plead to the sympathy and compassion of the world, for an unfortunate being, the stain never can be erased from her character. Pardon me, if my temper is soured by misfortune, if I express myself warmly; but not to revive hereafter the agony I now strive to flee, never, never again pronounce, or hint to me her name or cause!"

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

CHATEAU OF LEASPACH.

A TALE.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-street, London.

CHATEAU OF LEASPACH;

OR, THE

STRANGER IN SWITZERLAND.

A Tale.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

——————— Of all
Our passions, I wonder Nature made
The worst, foul Jealousy, her favourite :
And if it be not so, why took she care
That every thing should give the monster nourishment,
And left us nothing to destroy it with. SUCKLING.

VOL. II.

London:
PRINTED FOR A. K. NEWMAN AND CO.
1827.

CHATEAU OF LEASPACH.

CHAPTER I.

At sunset, they began to take in sail,
For the sky shewed it would come on to blow,
And carry away, perhaps a mast or so.

Don Juan.

The Voyage.

THE next morning, Mr. Everard arranged with his agents, the plan he had communicated to major Montrose, while the latter, in the course of the day, succeeded in disposing of his friend's commission. Mrs. Vernon charged herself with the office of supplying every thing necessary for the little Julia, and was

enabled to procure a French woman of good character, desirous of returning to her country, to act as her attendant. By the exercise of his interest, the general procured permission for Henry to embark in a vessel, chosen as a cartel, for the conveyance of exchanged prisoners of war; and had sufficient influence to obtain such letters and documents from foreigners of rank, as promised to permit Henry to traverse France, for the purpose of reaching Switzerland or Italy. Anxious as he was to quit England, he would have wished to have delayed longer than was allowed him his departure, as the vessel was to sail in three days for the Continent; but as another opportunity would not probably occur for a lengthened period, he determined to avail himself of it, notwithstanding the ardent persuasions and remonstrances of his friends to the contrary.

Feeling

Feeling a repugnance to go out by day, as soon as it was dark he repaired to his former house, to make the preparations necessary, prior to his departure. He found every thing in the same situation in which they had been left on the fatal morning of the duel; and as he endeavoured to summon his firmness, to the task of revisiting the many objects that recalled the moment when his misery was first announced, his heart sunk within him. In pointing out the various articles belonging to Mrs. Everard, now destined to be preserved by Mrs. Vernon, he was deeply affected; but recalling his courage, he hastily completed the necessary preparations, leaving the disposal of his property to his friend, major Montrose.

A few hours were adequate for his purpose, and he was on the point of leaving the room, when his eye fell upon the miniature picture of his wife. The

old servant had not dared to demand instructions respecting it; but he seemed to await submissively his master's orders, while the tears flowed rapidly down his wrinkled cheeks. His affection for his mistress had been unbounded; he had been in the service of Mr. Everard at the period of his marriage, and since their separation, his character had nearly undergone as great a change as that of him he served. In the general observation of the various articles, he had feared to refer to it; and Mr. Everard was struck by the imploring look with which he seemed to solicit its preservation.

Not daring to trust his voice, Henry, with assumed calmness, took the picture from its frame, and in the act of placing it in its case, he removed the dust that had settled on its surface, and seemed to linger in the act, until he became wholly lost in its contemplation; but

but at length hastily, and with a deep-drawn sigh, he placed it in his bosom.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the old man, who had regarded with intense anxiety his master's motions.

Henry started at the sound, and as he saw a slight smile settle on the features of Fritz, turned from him in ejaculating—"Never! never!"

It was yet early in the evening when he left his house, and to give free scope to his reflections, he did not feel disposed to return to the general's, but pursued his way mechanically through several streets, unconscious of the course he pursued, until the clock of St. Clement's church attracted his attention, and he found that unconsciously he had reached the verge of the Temple. Shuddering with horror, he changed immediately his direction, and sought to return by more unfrequented streets, in tak-

ing that which first offered itself: he had not proceeded far, however, before he was addressed by the demand—"Good cloash, mister — good as new; coats, waistcoats, inexpressibles—second hand or spick and span—cheap as dirt—walk in, sir, if you please—sure you'll buy—masquerade dresses, your honour."

The last words had an electric effect, and turning to regard the person who spoke, he observed a face he had somewhere seen before, but where, he could not at the moment recollect; and by the light of the shop, at the door of which Henry paused, he saw that he was also recognised by the young man.

"Lord, how funny!" exclaimed the clothes-merchant; "who would have thought old friends should come plump upon one another in this here way? Why, I say, I guessed as how you was in quod!"

While

While the latter thus gave utterance to his surprise, Henry recalled the features of the hopeful Israelite with whom he had travelled in the mail; and remembering the information of Mr. Greville, respecting the share which his female relative had in the concerns of Edwards and Mr. Vavasour, he immediately entered the shop, making his way through the portal hangings of the stock in trade, to which his attention had been so cordially invited.—" Is your aunt here, my friend? I would desire to speak with her."

" Walk into the back parlour, and sit down a bit," answered the officious Jew, delighted with the visit. " Won't let you stop in the shop; come to the fire. I was just going to eat a bit for supper. Will you pick a bone, or wet your whistle? Don't say no, if you will, you know. Well, to think we should meet again!"

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" I am much obliged to you," said

Henry, "but must decline your offer; my motive for entering was to inquire respecting your aunt."

"Why aunty's off, if you must know; she has tipped them the go-by, and left the three golden balls to take care of themselves. So I slips into her shoes, and here I am quite comfortable and respectable like. But don't go for to think I keeps up mammy Simmons's trade; for Sall Isaacs, who will soon be Mrs. Nat Davis, was above it. So you must know, this here is now a magazine for fashions."

"But your aunt?"

"Why, aunty was a bit afeard of the bum-bailies, and made off in a jiffey. But, I say, how nicely you diddled the lawyer! what a clean hit you must be! But didn't you shake when the bullets whizzed about? It must be wastly aukward."

"Mr. Davis, or whatever your name may be, I beg you will inform me whether

ther I could, by any means, find the person I seek; and let me ask you to refrain from any unnecessary reference to my concerns."

"There now, you are up, as Sadler says to his balloon! But don't get into a passion; a joke's a joke; I gives and takes. Why I'll tell you all about it. When aunty and Bet Waters, or Misstress Edwards, had resolved to do the job, and grab the jewels as they lightened you of—and a deuce of a sweep it was—that ere night as your wife galloped off, and left you in the lurch—— But tell us a bit, have you diskivered her yet?"

Henry arose, overcome by rage, and was on the point of striking the Israelite to the ground, but the intense curiosity which possessed him, to learn all his vulgar companion was acquainted with, held his arm, and he endeavoured to suppress his indignation.—"Who took the jewels, do you say?" he demanded.

"Why that's what I was going to say, if you hadn't got so red, as the cook said to the lobster. Why, Bet Waters and aunty—didn't they get a key made for the box, and agree with that fellow you shot, that they should have the prize to themselves?"

"And where, in God's name, are those persons? Tell me, and I shall reward you most liberally."

"Why, as to that, I am just about as wise as yourself. All I know is, that the night the crowner's quest was holden on that ere Mr. Vavasour, there was some paper found about a forgery of a bill, in which aunty and Bet Waters had a hand; and so it was sent to Bow-street; and the same night they set off, bag and baggage; but where, I knows no more than father Abraham. But stop, I say, tit for tat's all fair. Can't you give us a bit of news? I'll be mum as a herring. What a devil of a trick she played you! How nicely she gave you

you the slip! But, I say, may be she wasn't your lawful wife? So much the better, if you wasn't tied to her. 'Twixt friends, no secrets. Maybe a left-handed concern?—Ha! Perhaps a bit of a concubine or so?—Ha!" said the Jew, winking facetiously.

"Scoundrel!" said Henry, unable to restrain his fury, and seizing the Jew by the collar, and shaking him with violence, "I will make you repent."

But ere he finished his sentence, his victim escaped his grasp, and overturning the light, rushed from the shop, yelling forth his fears and complaints, with a degree of vigour that threatened to assemble the neighbourhood. Reaching the street, he shouted—"Thieves! robbers! murder! help!" so loudly and incessantly, that Henry became instantly aware of his imprudence; and groping his way through the second-hand gentility by which he was surrounded, gained the street, and reaching a passage lead-

ing to the Strand, escaped the effects with which the fears of the Jew had menaced him.

As he returned to the general's, he reflected on what he had heard, and vainly endeavoured to account for the conduct of Edwards, in stealing the jewels by means of a counterfeit key, when his guilty partner and her associate could have placed them without difficulty in her possession. Arrived at the house, his antipathy to alluding farther to the subject of his griefs, induced him to be silent on what had passed, especially as no material information had been elicited.

Mr. Everard the succeeding night, after having taken an affectionate leave of general Montrose and his niece, proceeded with the major down the river, to the vessel destined to convey him to France, having sent his servants and child

child in the morning, to avoid the consequences of the confusion attendant upon getting under weigh in the dark, which it was necessary to do in taking advantage of the tide.

On embarking, he found his attendants and the little Julia had retired to their births, as had the numerous Frenchmen, who were shortly to revisit their native land; so that he was enabled freely to converse with the major, to whom he repeated his intreaties to afford the unhappy mother of his child every assistance in his power, and his injunctions to do so without reference to himself, and without the mention of her name. Taking leave of his friend, he remained some time on deck, contemplating the city which he had now quitted, perhaps for ever, and whose lofty buildings were clearly delineated by the rising moon.

Although

Although he yearned to tread a foreign shore, where language, manners, and customs, so different from his own, might tend to distract his thoughts from the painful object upon which they continually dwelt, yet as the vessel got under weigh, and he marked her progress, he almost breathed the wish that his measures had not been so precipitate, and that he had not so hastily abandoned the scene of his misfortune. A half-formed doubt gained entrance to his mind, and with it a transient beam of hope, that his conclusions on the past had been erroneous. He almost blamed his obstinate refusal to acquiesce in the wishes of his friends; and he thought he had too readily severed the clue which might have developed the mystery that hung over much of what had occurred. He sighed deeply, as taking a fond and lingering look of the shore he was rapidly passing, he retired to the cabin to seek for rest.

His

His repose, however, was frequently disturbed by the expressions of pain and uneasiness, that were uttered by a person who lay on the opposite side of the cabin, and on whom two domestics were, during the night, in constant attendance. The voice of the sufferer he deemed to be familiar to his ear; but although it was that of a fellow-countryman, he could not recollect where he had heard it. As the day broke, he was awakened by the songs and shouts of the joyous Frenchmen, who, although still below hatches, were celebrating their promised return to liberty and home. They were chiefly military officers, and men of rank, who, in their anxiety to hasten the moment of re-treading their long-loved shores, had chosen to embark in a small and incommodious vessel, to accept the humble accommodations destined for the mariners, and risk the consequences of a scanty stock of provisions, rather than

by

by awaiting the time necessary to prepare a more commodious transport, retard the happy instant for which many of them had sighed probably for years. Dressing himself, he went on deck, where he found the nurse, and his child, had preceded him, the former suffering severely from the rolling of the vessel, while its motion gave the latter the greatest delight, and her indications of joy amused her foreign companions, in the arms of one of whom she was held.

Henry, in apologizing for the trouble the French officer had assumed, offered to withdraw her; but her new acquaintance insisted on retaining his little charge.

"She is not of the slightest trouble, I can assure you," he replied to the instances of Mr. Everard; "on the contrary, I enjoy a pleasure long denied me; and when you learn that I hope soon to embrace a large family of my own,

own, from whom I have been for years divided, you will easily believe that this sport is not novel to me."

In the course of conversation, he informed Henry, with that frankness that characterizes his nation, that he had been taken prisoner while in command of a small vessel of war, which he had defended until her sinking state obliged him to surrender; and that his government had been so well satisfied with his conduct, that he had been one of the earliest objects selected to benefit by the cartel. He said his name was Mercier; and on learning Henry's intention of passing through Paris, he offered his services, in the most friendly and obliging manner.

At this moment, the person whose sufferings had attracted Henry's attention during the night, slowly ascended the companion steps, supported by his servants;

servants; and as he now considered the emaciated form that presented itself to his sight, was astonished and affected to recognize his brother, lord Bridgenorth.

He instantly approached him, when his lordship, whose surprise was equal to his own, took his hand with warmth, and held it long and affectionately between his own.—"You here, my poor Henry!" he said, with a feeble voice; "things are sadly changed with both of us since we last met: I have learned the many calamities which have befallen you, and the sufferings you have so unmeritedly undergone; and should have hastened to condole with you, but the consciousness of having so long treated you with harshness, and my infirmities, prevented me. Deeply as I regret the cause which has produced this unexpected rencounter, I am rejoiced to see you once more before I bid farewell to the world, and to ask your forgiveness."

Henry

Henry assured his brother of his not having, at any moment, felt the slightest resentment, save on the occasion of his allusion to one, from whose cause he was now for ever divided.

"I was wrong to use the terms which offended you," replied his brother; "and still more culpable to have listened to one whose heart teemed with hatred to all who bore my name."

"To whom do you allude?" demanded Henry.

"To that wretch Edwards, whose infamy has brought misery upon you."

Henry, to divert a conversation which became painful, sought the little Julia, whom he presented to her uncle, who long and warmly embraced her. On lord Bridgenorth's demanding his future intentions, he recounted the plan he proposed to adopt; and his brother begged of him, as it was his desire, if possible,

possible, to reach Florence, to accompany him on his journey. To his offer, Henry readily acceded, determined not to leave him in his actual state of debility. The day was passed in remembrances of the scenes of their childhood, and towards evening, they neared the French coast; but as the sun declined, the wind changed suddenly to the north-east, and was not only unfavourable, but threatened to increase in violence.

The countenance of the master of the vessel was not at all satisfactory, as he regarded the rising clouds, and contemplated the streamers in the sky, which sailors have named mares' tails, and which are generally sure forerunners of a storm. In fact, ere long, the wind became more violent; and at the moment when the passengers had anticipated the joy of setting foot upon the French shores, orders were given to stand out to sea for the night. Henry having seen

seen his child in her birth, persuaded his brother to retire, as the pitching of the vessel became every moment more disagreeable. For himself, he remained on deck with captain Mercier, to assist the crew, and also to render service to his brother, whose servants were now completely disabled, through sea-sickness, from affording him any attention. As the gale increased, the master took in sail, and those which remained were close reefed. By midnight it was at its height, accompanied by a tremendous swell; and the waves broke repeatedly and furiously over the vessel, while her timbers creaked beneath each successive shock. The moon only served to display the wildness of the scene; while the sailors with difficulty trod the deck, which had become slippery from water; and the helm required the utmost exertion in their power, as the vessel drove before the gale. During the night, Henry was actively employed in assist-

ing his brother, who was severely affected by sea-sickness, which his debility scarcely permitted him to support.

As the morning broke, the wind in some measure abated; but a heavy sea still prevailed, and at noon they found they had run a great distance out of their course, and were far from the shores of France or England. Towards the evening the wind had wholly subsided, and was succeeded by a calm, attended by a heavy swell, which rendered the motion of the vessel even more unpleasant than before, and tended still further to drive her from her destination.

The effects of the storm, and the fearful rocking which succeeded, tended so far to strain the timbers of their crazed transport, that the master on examination became seriously alarmed, as he knew she had been taken up merely for a short passage, and was little enabled to

to withstand the shocks to which she was incessantly subjected. A new cause of uneasiness also arose, on ascertaining that the unequal stock supplied for the passengers and crew had been nearly consumed. The last difficulty was however in a great degree obviated, by lord Bridgenorth placing his entire collection at the disposal of the master; and so liberally had he been provided, that, with the store laid in by Henry, all present uneasiness was averted. This act secured them the good will of their associates; and during the illness of her nurse, the little Julia found as many nurses as there were prisoners on board, each vying with the other in shewing her attention. In the afternoon of the third day, a light breeze from the south-west sprang up; but by carrying a press of sail, they made considerable way during the night; and as it did not fail at any time during the succeeding day, they made the port of Havre-

Havre-de-Grace ere sunset, and were enabled to land the same night.

It was midnight ere they reached their inn, where a cheerful fire, and the attention of their hosts, soon banished the recollection of late hardships; and the extraordinary distinction in style and manner between the country they had left, and that which had received them, was at once a source of entertainment and surprise. However inferior the comforts of their inn, as compared with those of England, yet the sufferings they had endured at sea were well calculated to give a zest to their situation; and their foreign friends used every exertion to give a favourable impression of the land whereon they had entered.

Although the war between England and France was then at its height, and national enmity was demonstrated on either

either side without qualification, yet in no instance were the travellers annoyed or insulted by expressions of hatred or ill-will; but on the contrary, experienced the greatest civility from all ranks. As the lengthened period of hostility had but rarely permitted the visit of British subjects to the shores of France, their presence was hailed with that delight by which every novelty is greeted there.

Shortly after they entered their apartment, Henry was waited upon by a superior officer of police, who announced that every facility would be afforded to their progress through the country, which it was desirable should be made with as little delay as was consistent with the health of his brother; and that although they must consider themselves under the inspection of his department, yet its superintendance should be exercised with the utmost delicacy, and would

rather prove a source of safety and protection, than of annoyance or control.

Supper having been prepared, lord Bridgenorth and Henry deemed it proper to join their fellow-passengers, notwithstanding the fatigue of the former, as they had been much indebted to them generally on board for various kind offices, and it might be the last occasion in which they would be assembled. At table the most hospitable invitations were lavished by their kind-hearted companions; but the health of his brother, and the prudence which their situation demanded, induced him to give the preference to captain Mercier's offers of service on their arrival in Paris. Ere they retired to rest, they took a friendly leave of their fellow-voyagers, and particularly of monsieur Mercier, who was to quit Havre at daylight for the metropolis.

The

The illness of lord Bridgenorth was so materially aggravated by the passage, that he was obliged to remain for several days at Havre; but the climate of Normandy soon proved of advantage to the invalid, and he prepared to proceed to Paris. During their stay at the former place, Henry was permitted to examine the town and its celebrated port, whose rapid increase justified the views of its noble founder, Louis the Twelfth, fitly surnamed " the Just, and father of his people," who strove to rival the rising commerce of England, until the famous battle of the Spurs, in hastening his death, threw the nation into the deepest affliction. The fortifications erected by his successor, Francis the First, and the citadel, destined to repulse the frequent attacks of the English, excited his admiration. He was here shewn the house in which those celebrated authors, the two Scuderis, were born, of whom the sister may be considered as

having first introduced to the world those compositions entitled romance, which, however generally contemptible, from the extravagance and absurdity she displays, evince occasionally much ingenuity, and many traits of a fertile invention, badly directed.

Leaving Havre, they visited the small town of Harfleur, taken and sacked by Henry the Fifth of England, prior to the famous battle of Agincourt. Its port, although once of considerable importance, since the retirement of the Seine from its walls, which it once washed, can now scarcely be traced; and on that event it was obliged to yield its ancient preeminence to the more modern town of Havre, while Francis the First dismantled the fortifications, and destroyed the defences, which, with the loss of its commerce, were no longer useful. At Bolbec they viewed the country of Larrey, author of an history

of

of England, and the biographer of the Second Charles, the Second James, and the Third William, whose works have long fallen into disrepute.

Proceeding onward, they arrived at Yoetot, now despoiled of its ancient, high-sounding titles, whose walls once encircled a kingdom, and whose seigneur bore the appellation of a monarch, in consequence of Clothaire the First, of France, having killed Walter, one of its ancient lords, in the church of Soissons, and who strove to repair the crime, by conferring the title of king upon the successors of the murdered seigneur, a title which they bore until the jealousy of Louis the Eleventh reduced it to a principality.

At Rouen they took up, for some time, their residence, and gratified themselves by the inspection of the many objects which that ancient capital of the

dukedom of Normandy presents as interesting to Englishmen. Here the statue of the unfortunate Jeanne d'Arc presented itself to their regard; and Henry viewed with interest the image of her who was equally ill-treated by those whom she had served and injured. When summoned before her judges, who, to the number of fifty, were distinguished by the title of doctors, her answers to the extraordinary questions put to her, are more creditable to her genius, than the demands proffered are to the sense or learning of her interrogators.

"When saint Michael appeared to you, was his head covered with hair or not?" was inquired of her.

"Wherefore should it have been shaved?" was the counter question of the intrepid peasant.

"Was the archangel naked?" was the demand which succeeded.

"Do

"Do you believe God was unable to clothe him?" was the counter demand.

Condemned to death, she was led to the cemetery of saint Ouen, where a priest addressed to her a discourse, in uttering which, having insulted the French king, Charles, he was interrupted by La Pucelle, who, with a loud voice, told him that he lied. Tied to the stake, she boldly prophesied the misfortunes which should shortly descend on England, and predicted that all her judges should die under extraordinary circumstances. The calamities of England justified her declaration; while Mezerai asserts, that those who sentenced her, by the fearful manner of their deaths, completed the prediction.

To what is real in the history of her execution, much of fiction has been added, as it is stated, that when her body was consumed, her heart was discovered

entire and unaffected by the flames; and that when they were at their height, a white dove was seen to take its flight from amid the blazing mass.—Many have asserted, that she was not thus sacrificed, but a woman already condemned was executed in her stead; and what seems uncontradicted is, that some years after, a female appeared in Lorraine, calling herself the Maid of Orleans, who was shortly married to the seigneur des Armoises, under the title of "Du Lys," which king Charles had conferred on her, and whose descendants are still living. In either event, ten years subsequent to her death, real or presumed, she had the equivocal satisfaction of her process being revised by the pope Calixtus the Third, who declared it erroneous, and that she had been a martyr to her religion, her country, and her king.

Celebrated as the birth-place of the two Corneilles and Fontenelle—of Auzout,

zout, inventor of the micrometer, and many others of distinguished note, Rouen offers, in its library and museum, its ancient and magnificent cathedral, its curious bridge, its commercial establishments and manufactories, much to interest every description of traveller; while the character and manners of its inhabitants are calculated to excite regret in those who, having had time to become acquainted with them, are obliged to separate themselves from their society.

At Vaudreuil they beheld the ancient castle, in which the cruel and ambitious queen Fredegonde was imprisoned, and where she closed her sanguinary career. Born of humble parents, in Picardy, she entered the service of the queen Audonaire, and soon succeeded in poisoning the mind of her royal husband, and obtaining the repudiation of her mistress. Deceived in her hopes of succeeding the victim in her honours, by Chilperic's

adopting another partner in her place, she assassinated the new object of her jealousy, and shared the bed and throne of her master, whom she stimulated to the commission of the most infamous crimes towards his subjects; and on whose death she armed herself against his successor, Childebert, defeated his troops, ravaged Champagne, and retook Paris, accompanying her success by the exercise of fire, sword, and poison, on all who opposed her, until, in 596, she ended a life, rendered glorious by her successes, and infamous by her crimes.

In passing St. Germain en Laye, they observed the palace where the last monarch of the race of the Stuarts passed his latter days, and who, by his skill and courage, might have been deemed worthy of a throne, had not his possession of it proved the contrary. After his death, miracles were attributed to him, particularly in the cure of the bishop

shop of Autun; but, as it has been well observed by a French writer, however doubtful may be the operation of miracles by him after his decease, it is certain he effected none during his life.

CHAPTER II.

——————Turn we to survey,
Where ruder climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.

The Traveller.

Switzerland.

MONSIEUR Mercier received Henry and lord Bridgenorth at Paris with every mark of hospitable attention; and they there witnessed a scene, congenial to the taste of Englishmen—that of domestic comfort and felicity. The numerous and lovely family of the captain, rendered his house a paradise to the little Julia, who, long accustomed to strange countenances, and deprived of the kind solicitude she once shared, was warmly

warmly and eagerly welcomed by her new friends, with whom confidence and affection was speedily established.

The innumerable and admirable memorials which Paris presented, under the imperial sway, of ancient art and modern glory, were frequently visited by the travellers. Notwithstanding the inveteracy with which hostilities between the two countries had been so long pursued on either part, they experienced on every side that civility and politeness for which the people are renowned, and had reason to believe that the national enmity was more political than personal. But if they were forcibly struck by the many evidences of national greatness which surrounded them, they could not be insensible to the moral defection that generally prevailed. Although the glory that attended the march of the nation might be properly claimed as the right of the people by whom it had been achieved,

achieved, and although the crimes attending its attainment was confined to a few, yet the baneful influence of superior example had been widely felt, and those prouder and nobler principles which once adorned their character, had yielded to more selfish and meaner considerations. The seeds of those better qualities could not however have been wholly destroyed; and it was to be hoped, that in the country of St. Louis and Henry the Fourth, of Gaston de Foix, and of Bayard, heroism might ere long be accompanied by generosity, and valour not blush to be the handmaid of religion; that the spirit of ancient chivalry might temper modern courage; and that the aspirations of a high-minded people might be directed to objects of virtue, under the mild rule of the Bourbons.

After benefiting by the attentions of Monsieur for some weeks, the advance of

of spring, and the increased warmth of the season, enabled them to leave Paris, and to direct their course towards Switzerland. Resting some days at Sens, they visited its ancient and magnificent cathedral, where, in 1140, St. Bernard attacked the writings and opinions of the famous Peter Abelard, which, although warmly defended by their celebrated author, were condemned by the council, and its judgment ratified by the Pope. Thence proceeding by Dijon, the birthplace of Bossuet, and the ancient capital of the dukes of Burgundy, and Dole, the chief city of Franche Comte, they soon felt, by the increase of cold, their approach towards the frontier. Passing the chain of the Jura, they reached the last French post at the hamlet of Les Rousses, where they encountered a new winter; and although it was now the commencement of the month of April, they were under the necessity of stopping, until their carriages were dismounted,

mounted, and placed upon sledges, or traineaux, to enable them to pass the deep snows which covered the mountain of the Dole. As they passed that bleak and desert track, leading to the first Swiss village, the foot-marks of the wolves might be frequently discerned; while the eddies of wind which rushed violently from the ravines above, raised enormous columns of snow around them, which often impeded the progress of their horses, and threatened wholly to obstruct their road, or bury them beneath the drifting mass.

Having overcome their various difficulties, they arrived at the little village of St. Curgen, on entering Switzerland, whence they were to commence their descent to that beautiful and fertile country, washed by the waters of the Leman. The fatigue caused to lord Bridgenorth by their journey over the snow, and the concussions he was obliged to

to endure from the unequal nature of the road, rendered it necessary to stop at this place to recruit his strength, which was visibly and fast declining. Although he had passed his life in licentiousness and dissipation, and had formed, from the character of those with whom he had been long linked, a contemptible idea of human nature, and assigned to self-interest the motive for the few good qualities which it was permitted him to descry partially, in the degraded sect by which he had been surrounded, yet all worthier feelings were not extinct; and as he saw his brother Henry strive to vanquish the painful emotions which would frequently assail his breast, for the purpose of giving all his care towards one who had treated him with unkindness—when he considered him in the act of condolence, and heard the expression of sympathy bestowed upon a brother's sufferings, while on his own pangs he never dwelt

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—when he witnessed proofs of fraternal affection, which had been so long wantonly repelled and scorned, and observed the silent but manly struggle with which he opposed self-despair, seeking aid in religion to combat with his griefs, he could not refrain according his respect and admiration to his character, until the constant regard of his many virtues awakened in his own bosom those principles which were not yet wholly decayed; and in acknowledging the justice of the doom to which he was condemned, feelingly and bitterly deplored that career, in which rank, station, honour, and faith, had been abandoned, for objects vile and worthless, and which left him desolate, unpitied, and alone, at the appearance of the earliest cloud which threatened to obscure his gay but dangerous course. Pressing his brother's hand, as he sat by him, watching the variations of his disorder, he warmly thanked him for all his kindness.—"My hour

hour is fast approaching," he said, " and I feel happy that I have been allowed to bid adieu to the world, far from the scene of my shame and sorrow, and still more grateful that my last moments will be passed with you, and that in a foreign land my eyes shall be closed by a brother's hand. I would not pain you by the idea, that in what I have done, any attempt to compensate your unbounded goodness towards me has been made. My sincere affection, a sense of duty, and a consciousness of your many virtues, induced me at Paris to make such a disposition of my property, as will render your little Julia independent. My will has been forwarded to London, and on my decease you will write to my agent; and I only hope, that hereafter she may tend to heal the wounds which have been inflicted on you."

Henry thanked his brother warmly and sincerely, for this proof of affection to

to his child; and as the weather, which had been unfavourable during the day, had become fine, he supported him to a bench, near the inn, whence the novel landscape which the spot presented, might be viewed.

The prospect afforded by the romantic village of St. Ciergue, situated on the side of the Dole mountain, the highest of the chain of the Jura, and surmounting the Pays de Vaud, is probably unrivalled in the world; and Henry and his brother contemplated with intense delight the contrasted and magnificent scenery, and dwelt upon the glorious assemblage of varied objects which were luxuriantly spread before them. The spot where they rested was on the verge of opposite climates. Behind them was the Jura, covered with snow, while her dark and naked pines bent before the blast that threatened destruction to the traveller, as it pursued its impetuous

impetuous course, with a sound more wild and savage than the howling of the wolves that sought shelter in its deep recesses. Before them lay the fertile and verdant plain, extending from the mountain's foot to the Lake of Geneva, and from the romantic hamlet of Clarens and the chateau of Chillon, to the populous city of Geneva, interspersed with towns and villages, and where all was life and cheerfulness. On the broad expanse of the lake, the last beams of the setting sun reposed, while on the extent of its clear and calm surface, the various barks that moved gently on its bosom displayed their white sails to the setting ray. On the right, the city of Geneva might be clearly defined; and on the left, the picturesque town of Lausanne rose proudly above the lake, amid plantations of vines, and surrounded by numbers of beautiful country seats.

Beyond the lake, the mighty Alps, as far

far as the eye could reach, displayed their hoary summits, rising in sublime and awful majesty above the evening clouds which had collected around their sides; and the partial lights which broke at intervals, delineated the ever-varying form of their rude and enormous masses. From the centre of the line of mountains, Mont Blanc stood preeminent in unclouded brilliancy, its snowy surface having assumed a bright and crimson hue, when its mighty, yet humbler neighbours, no longer reflected the beams of day, and the plain below was already covered by the shades of night, until its vivid tints gradually fled, and the grey and ashen hue of evening succeeded.

The power of representing the glorious spectacle beheld by Henry, must ever be imperfect; and pen or pencil must equally fail in attempting to represent those scenes, at once gay and terrific, which meet the astonished sight, and impress

impress upon the rudest, as on the most cultivated minds, awe, wonder, and delight. The wreck of a world destroyed, untouched, untrod, since the era in which it was convulsed, frowning in savage majesty o'er plains where all is tranquillity and peace; the tempest raging round the mountain's brow, while the peasant who views from the plains below the distant storm, carols in the sunshine which animates and vivifies all around him; the eternal winter, unchangeable in feature, which reigns upon the Alpine heights, viewed beneath the glow of summer—all conspire to create a deep sense of the wondrous works of God, and to inspire a consciousness of human nothingness. The peasant, who from infancy has daily contemplated the magnificent panorama that surrounds him, feels, in his long established intimacy with the scene, no decrease of his enthusiasm; for the phases of the prospect are as various and dissimilar as the incalculable

calculable combination of colours in a kaleidescope, ever changing and ever new.

The hoary head of Mont Blanc, which had for some time been veiled in darkness, now, to the surprise of the travellers, suddenly became again illuminated, and reflected once more the rays of the orb which had been long lost to the view of the nether world. A soft track of light upon the outline of the Alps shortly after gave notice of the moon's approach, and the mountain ridges became clearly developed for some time before its orb had surmounted the lofty pyramid which concealed it from the view, and as it gained the summit of Mont Blanc, appeared a volcano issuing from its white and icy cone, until it gave again to view the Pays de Vaud, the calm surface of lake Leman, and the plains of Savoy. They remained until a late hour, and retired at length unsated

unsated by the consideration of the scene they had beheld.

At an early hour the next morning, they descended the Jura; and having reached the plains, coasted the lake, until towards evening they reached the city of Lausanne, and were rejoiced to meet with the indulgencies it is so eminently calculated to afford.

It was at the commencement of the present century that Henry and his brother arrived at the city of Lausanne, where, although the aid afforded by the French arms towards furthering their endeavour to free themselves from the yoke of the government of Berne, had created a feeling of popular dislike to all who were the enemies of that power, and had even called forth decrees of a hostile nature in regard to England from the Swiss republic, as futile as absurd, they met with all the politeness, hospitality,

and attention, which have ever characterized the superior classes of the inhabitants of that city towards individuals. With letters of introduction to the best families, they had been liberally furnished on their departure from England; and for some weeks they enjoyed the gratifications of society far superior to what can be met with in the other cities of Switzerland, and which has long preserved its character, by the jealousy with which its selection has been composed and preserved, and which has rendered its attainment as desirable as it is difficult to the community.

The health of lord Bridgenorth, which had gradually continued to fail, was at length so wholly undermined, and his debility now increased so rapidly, that he was obliged to keep his chamber; and it was evident that the moments would be but few, ere with the concerns of this world he would hold no further relation.

relation. All that professional skill or individual kindness could contribute to alleviate his sufferings, were largely and freely exercised; but they hourly became more intense, until they ceased with the last stage of existence.

Henry left not his brother's bedside, but continued to watch the progress of his malady, and lent all his care to console the patient. As he sat by him, on the evening of his decease, after the last sacraments of the church had been administered, lord Bridgenorth recurred to the alienation which, through his fault, had subsisted between them, and again implored forgiveness for his former unkindness. He then demanded the little Julia, whom Henry brought to her uncle; and he deposited a small casket in her hands, as the last memorial of the warm affection which she had since some time excited in his breast.

When she had retired, he seized Henry's hand, and feebly said—"It is now time to bid you farewell—the lamp of life is nearly extinct, the light flits fast, and my moments are few and numbered. Convey to my brother Thomas my last wish, that he no longer withhold from you his friendship, when I am no more; and for yourself, confide in the sincerity of a dying man, for the grief he feels at the unhappiness you have been destined to endure. For myself, my early sentence is but the penalty attached to my former vices; my fate has been deserved, but I humbly hope for pardon. Adieu! may God Almighty bless you!"

The exertion which had enabled him to express himself was too much for his exhausted nature, and still holding his brother's hands, he fell back upon his pillow, and expired.

Henry's

Henry's grief at the loss of his brother was deep and unaffected; he saw him, with many amiable qualities, and with qualifications suitable to his rank and station in society, fall the easy victim of his errors, and sacrificed by yielding to the enticements of those whom in his heart he secretly despised. Having paid the last duties to the remains of lord Bridgenorth, he immediately wrote to his successor, and to his late brother's agent, communicating the event. To the former he conveyed the wish which had been expressed for the revival of fraternal confidence and union; and to the latter he transferred such papers as were of import.

Some weeks elapsed ere he had a reply from his brother Thomas, who now possessed the title and estates annexed to it, acknowledging, in cold terms, his letter, and stating that, in reference to his deceased brother's request, he deem-

ed it of less force than the injunctions of a father, by whom he had been commanded to consider him as an alien to his family.

The disposition of Henry revolted at the heartless conduct of his only brother, and he had the less pain in discontinuing all correspondence at the point where it had commenced.

By the agent he was informed that the estates derived by the late lord from his mother, to the amount of eight hundred pounds a-year, had been devised to Julia; and that measures were adopted to secure the possession of them in her person, on her coming of age; until which period they were to be administered by her father.

The object that now peculiarly engrossed his thoughts, was that of his daughter's education; and he was soon happy

happy to find, that, in the neighbouring canton of Fribourg, the convent of St. Ursule offered peculiar advantages; and that she might there attain all the accomplishments he could desire her to be possessed of, while the character and manners of its inhabitants were subjects of general eulogium. Having received letters for the superior of the establishment, he proceeded with Julia to the city of Fribourg; and was happy at the opportunity of performing the duties enjoined by his religion, and which the solemn season which immediately precedes Easter, rendered indispensable.

On the succeeding day, Mr. Everard and his daughter reached the convent of St. Ursule, situated in a fertile and sequestered vale, the walls of which were washed by the river Saane. The beauty of its site induced Henry to leave his carriage, to contemplate at leisure the scenery surrounding the building, which

was admirably adapted to the purposes of religious retirement. The monastery itself was a low, but extensive building, apparently of the sixteenth century; but the church attached to it was evidently of more ancient date, and a more imposing style of architecture, preserving the medium between the rich and florid character of the earlier ages, and that which marked the decline of the Gothic, by the greater meanness of its structure. From the centre arose a spire of peculiar elegance; while from the towers, at the extremity, issued the deep and solemn sounds of the conventual bells, that announced, with slow and melancholy toll, the preparations for the celebration of those severe observances imposed by the Catholic church, to commemorate the most awful passage in the history of its divine founder.

As the solemn tones ceased, the strains of the female choir stole upon the silence

lence of the valley; and Henry hastened to participate in the service, which had already commenced. The penitential office of the day was that of the adoration of the cross, which, however opposed to the simpler offices of the Protestant church, can rarely be witnessed with indifference, by those whose creed denies its necessity or propriety. However degraded this ceremony becomes in the churches of Italy and Spain, by the mummery with which it is attended, yet the rites of the Roman Catholics present themselves in a more favourable and respectable point of view, when exposed to the eye of criticism, or to the jealousy of those whom they are pleased to denounce as heretics.

After the agony had been chaunted, the venerable abbess, ascending the altar, displaced the sacred emblem of her communion from its station, and bearing it with trembling steps, deposited it reve-

rentially upon the ground. Having her head, arms, and feet, bared, in sign of grief and penitence, she proceeded in procession, followed by her nuns, down the lengthened aisle of the church, until at its extremity, she turned to proceed in the act of adoration. Kneeling, with their heads bowed to earth, thrice before they reached the nave, they there successively prostrated themselves near the crucifix, to which, with holy reverence, they applied their lips, while no sound disturbed the general silence; after which they raised it anew, and placed it recumbent upon the altar. The solemn and affecting sounds of the "*dies iræ, dies illa,*" had now commenced; and the service of the dead was chaunted by the community.

When the ceremony had concluded, Henry demanded an introduction to the abbess, who received him at the grate; and on perusing the letters with which he

he had been provided, readily undertook the charge of Julia, and promised to bestow every care and attention upon her education.

It was, however, with great difficulty that his daughter consented to the separation from the only friend she had long known, to reside with strangers, in a foreign land.

Promising to see her frequently, he bade her farewell, and returned to Lausanne, where he felt the void caused by her absence, and the pain of being divided from the only being to whom he was now warmly attached.

The solitude to which he was devoted was accompanied by a distaste for society, that induced him to seek some residence more appropriate to the indulgence of his melancholy than what towns or cities could afford.

After some inquiry, he obtained possession of a chateau in the western district of the Pays de Vaud, near the town of Nyon, which had been erected several centuries before, by a noble family of Berne, by whose descendants it had been constantly occupied, until the Vaudois asserted their pretensions to freedom and independence, and had shaken off the yoke of their aristocratic rulers. This event, which had been but recently consummated, obliged the proprietors of the chateau to abandon their property, in renouncing the feudal rights on which their wealth was founded; and Mr. Everard's offer to become the purchaser was eagerly acceded to by the unfortunate owners, by whom the buildings, furniture, and lands, were soon transferred to his possession. It was fitted up in conformity to the taste of a century past; and although the furniture corresponded but little with the more frivolous style which, in the country

try he had abandoned, has succeeded to the judicious and comfortable provision of our forefathers, it corresponded with the general character of the building.

With the old and faithful domestic who had followed his fortunes from America, he removed to his new habitation, and gave himself up to study and reflection, which was only occasionally interrupted by the visits of his daughter.

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

Had some good angel op'd to me the book
Of Providence, and let me read my life,
My heart had broke, when I beheld the sum
Of ills, which one by one I have endur'd.

Douglas, Act I. Scene 1.

The Return.

SOME weeks had elapsed since Mr. Everard had quitted England, when, as general Montrose's family were occupied in the consideration of the strange events which had induced him to abandon his native land, they were aroused by a loud and violent knocking at the street door. The late hour of the evening created surprise at the circumstance, which was not lessened when the door of

of the room opened, and Mrs. Everard rushed into their presence.

The night was wet and stormy, and her appearance proved that she had been exposed to all its rigours. Her figure was emaciated; her features pale as if the hand of death had set his seal upon them; her hair hung loose upon her shoulders, while the wet dripped from it; and her hollow and sunken eye turned its wild expression in every direction, as if in search of those on whom it had long rested with delight and rapture, to whom she had been once united, and by whom she had been now abandoned. After gazing for some time, she threw the damp tresses from her forehead, as if to be more sure that the objects she sought were not there; and after alternately regarding those assembled with an earnest scrutiny, that bespoke a disordered mind, she seemed to comprehend their absence, and at the same

same moment, uttering a deep groan, fell senseless on the ground.

However hostile to her crime and character were the sentiments of those who beheld her, animosity yielded to her wretched state, and human pity disarmed resentment. As the major raised her from the floor, Mrs. Vernon strove to revive her; but it was long ere, with every exertion, they could recall, even partially, her scattered senses. As she slowly recovered, she joined her hands in an attitude of supplication to the major; and her worn and pallid countenance plainly indicated that she intreated intelligence of her husband and her child.

The major strove to console her; but in avoiding to reply to her demand, his embarrassed air seemed to be readily understood by the miserable woman; and without the power of inquiring into the details,

tails, she comprehended that all hope was at once banished, and her feelings assumed a different and opposite tone of expression.

Her eyes seemed bursting from their sockets—her limbs quivered beneath the violent emotion by which she was agitated—she struck her forehead with force, as if to drive the little reason she had gained wholly from its seat—and afterwards tore the long tresses from her head with frantic fury, until the major and his father exerted all their strength to prevent the effects of her despair.

The force of her struggles at length overmastered her feeble powers, and she sunk exhausted on a seat, where she remained for some time, her eyes fixed on the ground, and in silence.

At length her recollection seemed to revive, and her manner became more tranquil;

tranquil; until, throwing herself upon her knees before major Montrose, she exclaimed, in a voice broken by sobs—"If you possess human pity, hear me!—if you have charity, or feeling—think, oh think upon the woes I have endured! the miseries—the many, the unutterable miseries I have suffered! Tell me, where is my husband? where is my infant? Would he not seek me? could he forget me, who loved him, as it were almost a sin to love, and leave me desolate in ruffian hands, fettered, and ill, and in despair? Look, oh look not thus! as you hope for mercy, do not thus torture me! but speak—say where is my Henry?—are they here?—are they in the house?"

The major strove to conceal his feelings, and could only answer by a gesture, which supplied all that speech dared not convey to the hapless creature.

As

As she witnessed the sign confirmatory of her fears, the strong shiverings of her frame announced that its meaning was not lost; she rushed to him, and seizing his arm with force, she fixed her horrorstruck regard for some time in silence, but with maddening intensity, upon his countenance, as if to learn whether she had not been deceived by the indication he had offered. Trembling and pale, she exclaimed—"What would you say?—they were not at my home! They turned me from my door, and said they knew me not! they mocked my misery—they termed me Bedlamite! But, come, he must be here—let us go to him—let us delay no longer. I have a tale to tell, will rend his heart! Come, come, sir, quickly!"

. . . . . .

The major resisted the efforts she made to draw him from the apartment, and turned an appealing regard to Mrs. Vernon, to ascertain how he might communicate

municate to the wretched creature the intelligence she sought, while the intense agony of her look testified she understood the nature of his glance.

"If you have hope of heaven, or pity at the hands of God, speak to me! I am prepared for all, as I have suffered all! I am content to die—but let me see my husband, if for a single moment; let me once more but see his face—then let earth cover me! Almighty judge! look down upon a poor, heart-broken creature, who betrayed to violence—heartlessly severed from the husband she adored—exposed to brutal force—her parched brain maddened with a thousand wrongs—injured, despised, forsaken, kneeling, and bowed to dust, prays at thy hand that pity denied her here." Rising, she proceeded, in a subdued and solemn tone, and with an expression apparently calm—

"Where

"Where is my husband?—where is Mr. Everard, sir?"

"Would I could say that he was here, madam."

"Shall I be allowed to go to him—to speak with him?"

"It is impossible."

"Why?—speak, sir, I conjure you!"

"Your husband and your child have left England."

The tranquil air she had assumed did not abandon her, as she listened to his words; she slowly raised her hand to her forehead, in saying—"Then God have mercy on me!"

No sigh escaped her, nor did her features express the violent emotion by which they had been before agitated. She arose from her seat, and methodically folded her dress around her, as she staggered to the door; but ere she reached it, a loud and piercing shriek burst from her; and as the major caught her

her as she fell, a frantic laugh told them that reason had fled its seat.

On the arrival of the physician, Mrs. Everard was immediately bled; but the most skilful efforts could not arouse her from the apathy in which all her faculties were buried; and it became a subject of doubt whether her mind would ever recover any portion of its former vigour.

As he did not object to her removal, it was deemed proper to transport her, without delay, to the habitation of the Holmeses, which was near, and where she was received affectionately by the aged couple, who, although aware of her disgrace, were not forgetful of the obligations they lay under to her; and although shorn of the beams of purity and innocence, regarded her rather as a fallen angel, than a polluted mortal.

Mrs. Vernon having accompanied her,

saw

saw her put to bed, and left her, with the intent of returning the next morning.

From the moment that her husband's absence had been communicated, she had not spoken; and whether alienated reason forbade the recurrence to the fact; or that her grief was superior to the usual indications, not a sigh escaped her. Implicitly she yielded to those around her—sleep rarely settled on her eyelids—a slow and consuming fever fastened on her frame—but she seemed insensible to reflection or to pain.

Weeks passed over the head of the wretched Mrs. Everard, without producing any alteration in her disorder; her mind remained apparently vitally impaired, and her strength had gradually decayed, notwithstanding the attention of the ablest physicians to restore her, until it became evident, that any further

further diminution of her force must assure her dissolution.

Two months had thus elapsed, when a sleep, unusually lengthened and profound, fell upon her, and it was pronounced that the decisive moment was near, and that death, or a transition towards convalescence, would ensue, although scarce a shadow of hope was entertained that the latter would be the result. Mrs. Vernon, who on this occasion had not left the bedside of her former friend, as she watched the deathlike slumber into which she had been so long sunk, could not refrain from tears, as she contemplated the wasted form and pallid features of the hapless creature. A deep and hollow groan, at the moment, burst from the patient, and gave the first evidence of feeling, on her part, since she had been ill. The emaciated sufferer opened her eyes, which, although dim and sunken, had lost their fixed and

and insensible expression, and her features gave slight signs of returning intelligence.

As she had often heard, that on the eve of dissolution, the deranged mind frequently recovered its capacity, Mrs. Vernon hesitated not to conclude, that the awful moment was at hand, and anxiously sought if her senses were restored. "Henry!" was the only word she uttered, but it gave assurance that mental integrity had revived, and Mrs. Vernon did not hesitate to address her.

In scarcely articulate accents, she replied—"I am better, for I am dying. Allow me the last offices of religion, and I shall be content."

The physician entered at the moment, and found that her mental powers had been restored, but the question of life and death would be shortly determined.

To give ease to her mind, he certified her being able to receive the communion of the Roman church; and the priest was immediately required to attend.

The consecrated host was accordingly borne to her, after she had undergone confession; and with the piety which had marked her former life, she received the sacred element, while the prayers for the dying were chaunted.

As the venerable ecclesiastic rose from the performance of the solemn service, she entreated that he would remain until major Montrose and Mrs. Vernon arrived—which they did instantly, on learning her desire to that effect.

On their entering the room, she begged to be raised in her bed, and with much difficulty, and in a feeble tone, often inrupted by weakness, she addressed the priest.—"In the humble confession of my

my sins, you have heard nothing which could account for the misery I have endured—nothing to justify the separation of my husband, or the absence of my child. To those ignorant of the tenor of our creed, it is necessary to declare the awful consequences attendant upon designed omission at this moment—everlasting perdition: such is our faith. According to that faith, I stand in the actual presence of the Divinity at this instant—of that divinity from whom nothing can be concealed. In that presence, I declare my innocence towards my husband; and when I am extinct, as soon I shall be, I pray the assurance may be conveyed to him by you, in the only form on which he may rely; with the solemn asseveration of purity in that respect, inform him my latest thoughts were his, and my last sigh implored a blessing on him and on my child."

Exhausted by the effort she had made, she sunk back on her pillow, and the seal of dissolution seemed set upon her face, as she continued the entire day in slumber. On the morrow, the physician was surprised at the favourable change which had taken place in the disorder of his patient, and he informed Mrs. Vernon, that all present danger was averted; but that the utmost quiet was necessary to prevent a relapse, which would be decidedly fatal.

Her recovery was indeed slow, and during its earlier stages, Mrs. Vernon saw her daily; but as her strength increased, the intervals of each successive visit became longer. The tone of affection, of compassion, and of kindness, which the agonies of the sufferer had wrung from her in the hour of pain and peril, became insensibly subdued; and although no expression ever escaped her lips, which could tend to make the cup

of

of bitterness overflow, her manner became more cold as her visits were less frequent.

Solemn and imposing as the asseverations of Mrs. Everard had been, and important as were the circumstances under which she declared her innocence, yet Mrs. Vernon was not affected by it, as forcibly as others better acquainted with the tenets of the Roman church might have been. The opinion of the world, at all times formidable, but more so as English society is constituted, denied her the decision of the guilt or innocence of Mrs. Everard, until a public vindication of her character had been completed; but even disposed as she was, from temper and affection, implicitly to credit the declaration made, yet overwhelming facts still intervened to confound it; and a chain of circumstances of such import, as to induce her husband to condemn her, must first be destroyed,

ere the hand of confidence and friendship could be extended towards her.

Whatever were the reflections of the unhappy woman herself, during the long period of returning convalescence, a thousand trifling circumstances tended to mark the alienation of former sympathy in the bosom of her friend; and the perception of the feelings which still operated against her character and peace, had an unusual effect upon her mind, as she slowly regained her health.

The Holmeses having recounted to her the beneficent and incessant attentions of Mrs. Vernon during the malady, her eyes spoke the grateful feelings of her heart; but no complaint of the past—no word of hope for the future—no renewed assertion of innocence, ever passed her lips; the names of her husband, or her child, were never breathed; yet there was a calmness and resignation

resignation in her manner, an indifference to all which actually surrounded her; her look seemed directed beyond this world, as if all earthly objects of former endearment were already buried in the grave, from which she had been almost miraculously withdrawn. If animation ever dwelt momentarily on her features, it was in the hour of prayer, and then only her apathy seemed subdued, as her eyes beamed with unwonted ardour, when directed in pure humility to the seat of mercy; a slight convulsive movement would mark her lips, and tears would often stream down her passive cheek; but with the termination of her religious duties, her usual manner would be resumed.

It was not until Mrs. Everard's health had been reestablished, that Mrs. Vernon, who had not seen her for some time, first ventured to address her.—"I fear," she said, "it will not be in my power

longer to continue the visits I have hitherto made, however strongly my inclination and feelings are opposed to it; but with every wish for the acquirement of health and tranquillity of mind, we shall all be most ready to shew ourselves subservient to your plans and your desires, particularly major Montrose, who is delegated to act in obedience to them."

"Then I must regard this as our last meeting," replied Mrs. Everard. "Well, be it so;—I must be content.—Receive the expression of a grateful heart for all your goodness (it shall never be forgotten), and my sincere, my heartfelt prayer for your happiness."

Mrs. Vernon was little prepared for this brief and decisive reply. She had come, assured that a painful explanation would be demanded respecting the past by the unfortunate lady; but, on the contrary, there seemed no disposition, on her

her part, to prolong the conversation; no wish for inquiry—no desire even to name those most dear to her.

After hesitating for some time, during which Mrs. Everard remained silent and tranquil, Mrs. Vernon rose to depart; but as she turned to bid farewell to one who had so long excited her interest and engrossed her care, and regarded the pale and extenuated, but mild and resigned countenance of her who had once shared her warmest friendship, she could not refrain from clasping her in her arms; and hiding her face in her bosom, sobbed loud and violently—"Oh, Mrs. Everard!" she at length exclaimed, "what misery has fallen upon us!—what wretched moments have been ours! How could you, Jane—how could you thus draw down ruin on all we loved? but let us hope forgiveness for our errors:—God bless you."

Mrs. Everard pressed her long and

warmly to her bosom without reply, and without evincing particular emotion: as her friend bade her adieu, she demanded if there were any thing in her power yet to do for her.

"Do you think I might solicit of major Montrose to see me?"

"It is his most anxious desire, and he would have shortly requested an interview, had you not named it. Mention the time, and he will be at your command."

"If to-morrow morning, at eleven, were not inconvenient, I should be happy to see him."

Mrs. Vernon, in tears, bade her farewell; and as she drove from the door, almost regretted not having intruded an inquiry as to the past, so much had the manner of Mrs. Everard revived, if not increased, all her former favourable impressions.

At

At the appointed hour, major Montrose was announced; and he entered with an air equally marked by grief and embarrassment. A silence succeeded for some time after he had been seated, until he felt himself compelled to disturb it.—"I am here, madam, to receive and obey your commands."

The only answer was a gesture, indicating that her endeavours to subdue her feelings had not yet been effectual; but in time, she assumed a degree of firmness that surprised her visitor, and which was contrasted by the debility her form yet evinced.

"My husband and my child, sir—are they yet living?"

"They are, madam, and in health."

"My senses have been greatly disturbed, and a painful but indistinct impression has rested on my mind—are they in England?"

"They have left this country some time since."

Although apparently prepared for this information, she seemed shocked to the greatest degree; she gasped for breath for some moments, but after a struggle, she recovered her tranquillity, and renewed the conversation.—"Something like this I had anticipated; I had, I believe, heard—where are they?"

"They are in Switzerland."

"Did Mr. Everard leave any directions respecting me?"

"He did, madam. The aid and protection of my family was sought and promised, and the amplest means have been provided to carry your intentions (whatever they may be) into effect: perhaps it is better at once frankly to state that conditions are likewise imposed upon me in that respect."

"At that I cannot be surprised; I am now a feeble, unprotected, and defenceless

less woman—disgraced in the eyes of man, but, as far as consistent with human infirmity, unsullied before Heaven—rudely torn from happiness—severed from those most dear—my character sacrificed by a foul conspiracy—subjected to violence and insult—the tie that attached me to the world has been mercilessly broken—I have been wronged—am innocent: I have been unheard, yet stand condemned to degradation and misery, without one arm being raised in my defence—without a sentence breathed in my behalf—without a tear having been shed at my hapless fate!"

"Do not imagine, madam, that you are succourless, or unprotected; as I have lived in hope that the cloud which has hung over the past may yet be dispersed, so am I ready to devote my life in vindication of your honour, in the attempt to restore peace to my unhappy friend; but it is to you that I must look for directions as to the path I should pursue."

"To

"To the world my justification is of little import; but to my husband and child, it is due; although 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick,' yet I confide in Heaven's mercy, that, helpless as I am, it will ere long be established."

"Were it possible for me, madam, to discover the retreat of your servant Edwards?" said the major, hesitatingly, and pausing for a reply to his suggestion.

"Her retreat?—Is she not with my husband and child?"

"You are aware—pardon me—but you appear ignorant that she absconded on the night you left your home."

"Seem ignorant! Absconded! What is your meaning, sir?"

"That if, as you assert, you have been the victim of a conspiracy, she was the prime agent, and can alone possibly solve this mystery."

"Then it was she who, while my senses were disordered, stood, like the arch fiend, exulting over her victim. I thought

thought it fancy—the creation of my disturbed imagination.—Proceed, I pray you, sir."

"The letters, madam—your jewels which you bore with you—the letters of Mr. Vavasour found in your cabinet—Edwards the companion of your flight ——"

"Great God, have mercy!" shrieked Mrs. Everard, "why have I been thus singled out for ruin and destruction? Letters! I know of none.—My jewels I never took! Tell me what you know, sir; for Heaven's sake, proceed!"

Major Montrose, without hesitation, recounted all which had occurred from the moment of her absence; and Mrs. Everard was so much affected by the various incidents he related, that when he had terminated his discourse, she was under the necessity of entreating him to defer until the morrow her own statement of what had taken place, to which he readily consented, as she promised

mised to elucidate much that was hidden in obscurity, and to furnish materials for a speedy development of the truth.

Leaving Mrs. Everard, major Montrose reflected with astonishment on what had passed; and the doubts that he had formerly entertained respecting her guilt, returned with renewed force. That a woman capable of abandoning the most sacred ties, would not hesitate to justify herself by falsehood and fabrication, there could be little hesitation in believing; but the air and manner of Mrs. Everard spoke "trumpet-tongued" in her favour, and it was impossible that the horror and astonishment she had shewn could be feigned, or the expression of innocence assumed; yet an impenetrable mystery still dwelt upon her history, which he fondly anticipated would, at the succeeding interview, be done away. He related to Mrs. Vernon the result of his visit, and she whose heart had plead-

ed

ed warmly in her favour since she had bid her farewell, hailed with rapture the new-born hope, that the acquittal of her friend was not far distant.

On his return to Mrs. Everard the succeeding day, he found her much exhausted by the emotion under which she had laboured, in consequence of what had passed between them, and evidently incapable of supporting a prolonged conversation.—"I have reflected," she said, "upon the information you have imparted to me, but so comprehensive have been the infamous artifices employed to my destruction, so successful have been the villainous designs formed against my peace and honour, that I feel myself unable to combat them in detail at this moment; nor would what I have to state be sufficient to empower you to trace the guilty authors of my unhappiness, unless it were so connected and combined, that the antidote to each baneful

baneful act shall be in your possession. I shall therefore put into writing every occurrence relating to myself; the delay will be trivial, but the benefit considerable." To this proposition he acquiesced, and promised zealously to use every exertion to secure to her the justice which he was assured was due to her wrongs—to vindicate her fame, restore her peace, and unite her to her family.

A week passed before he was again summoned to attend her, and when complying with her request he again waited upon her, she consigned to him the record of her misery. At the same time, she entreated him to mention the conditions imposed by Mr. Everard in her regard, when he told her, with as much delicacy as he could impart to his communication, the positive interdiction of correspondence or communication; and he also furnished her with the necessary documents relative to the provision left for her

her support. Painful as was the intelligence, she bore it with the greater firmness, as the hour seemed near when the fatal obloquy to which she had been doomed would be removed, and in the public proof of her virtue, she would be secure of her reunion to her husband and her child.

On his return home, the major received a summons to attend instantly at the Horse Guards; and on arriving there, received orders to repair to Falmouth, where one of the transports belonging to a secret expedition upon foreign and distant service, and which had already left Portsmouth, would await the dispatches of which he was selected to be the bearer, and thence proceed with him to join the fleet to which it belonged. Shocked at the interruption thus thrown in the way of his proposed plan, in aid of Mrs. Everard, he was only enabled to write a few lines, communicating

cating the unexpected obstacle which had occurred to the measures he had contemplated; but stating, that as he passed through Bath, he would deposit in his father's hands the statement she had furnished him with; and had no doubt, that as soon as the illness which had but then obliged the general to repair to that city with Mrs. Vernon, had terminated, he would use all his influence and zeal to complete the work which had been thus unfortunately impeded.

In a few hours he was on his way to his destination, and arrived at Bath, where he stopped merely the time necessary to communicate his wishes to the general, who engaged, should his health be restored, personally and actively to promote the object he had in view; or if his illness, which had materially increased, prevented his interference, to intrust the office to some person

son qualified to perform it. Major Montrose having bid them farewell, reached Falmouth the evening of the next day, and the wind being favourable, embarked, and in a short time was borne from the shores of England.

When Mrs. Everard received his letter, she felt that a special fate seemed destined to protract her misery; but still the prospect was bright; and although the period was deferred in which her innocence would be verified and made known, yet its arrival seemed positive, especially as she was favoured with a letter from Mrs. Vernon, acquainting her with the warm interest with which the general had adopted her cause, and that he had already prepared to take measures which tended to the result for which she sighed: but the courage or the apathy, the hope or the despair, which had hitherto supported her, yielded in a few days after to the shock she received,

received, in reading in the papers an account of his sudden death at Bath, and the illness of his niece; and she became confirmed in the belief, that she was predestined to experience a counteraction, in every attempt to regain that happiness she once enjoyed. The sullenness of despair fell upon her; her hopes were crushed; repeated disappointment chilled her heart; and she resolved to seek in solitude and retirement, "that peace which the world cannot give." Provided by the agent of Mr. Everard with the requisite funds, and combining with him the necessary measures, to transfer from time to time the sums devoted to her maintenance, to a foreign merchant, worthy of her confidence, and who had long acted for her father in London, she took leave of the Holmeses, after generously recompensing their kindness, but without communicating the direction it was her design

design to take, or hinting at the plan she proposed to pursue.

On Mrs. Vernon's return to town, she was much shocked to learn that their guest had departed, and left them ignorant of her place of retirement, and that her resolution seemed to have been adopted through motives of hopelessness and despair. Still cherishing the expectation of gaining intelligence of her friend, she proceeded to Mr. Everard's agent, who could merely state that he had been directed to pay to a Mr. Reymond, a foreign merchant in the city, the pension accorded to her, as it became due. Waiting upon the latter gentleman, Mrs. Vernon was received with politeness; but to her inquiries, the only reply afforded was—"That he was under the most solemn engagement not to disclose the retreat of Mrs. Everard, without her permission." Foiled in all her attempts to discover her former

mer friend, Mrs. Vernon was obliged to rely upon the hope, that in time, some clue might be attained, by which she might be permitted to renew a correspondence with one whom she loved and regretted.

Three months had elapsed, when she received a letter from Mr. Reymond, enclosing one from the object of her solicitude. As it bore no post-mark, or date, she was not enabled to advance further in her search; nor did its contents remove the mystery in which her absence was involved.

"The retirement I sighed for has at length been attained. As my assertions of innocence, however solemnly made, have been ineffectual and disregarded—and as each attempt towards justification has been foiled, and each successive ray of hope vanished as it arose,

arose, I felt that I should bow to the decrees of Providence, and in devoting my life to seclusion, strive to gain that tranquillity of mind which the world could not bestow.—I AM INNOCENT.

" If ever my memory should recall a sigh from the husband I adored, or excite a blush in the child I loved, let those words be repeated; and let it be said, that vanity, guile, or deceit, could no longer actuate her who uttered them, and whose last remaining hope is to see them, when the veil of mortality shall be withdrawn—when her acquittal shall be pronounced at the bar of heaven, and truth be published and proclaimed, in the sight of angels and of men.

JANE EVERARD."

CHAPTER IV.

Oh welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hov'ring angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity.

Comus, Act I. Scene 1.

The Religieuse.

TWELVE years had elapsed since the separation of Mr. and Mrs. Everard. Of the latter nothing had been heard by Mrs. Vernon during that period of time, notwithstanding her stated and regular inquiries of Mr. Reymond, who would only assure her that the person she sought was living.

Major Montrose had pursued his voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, whence he was transferred to the East Indies, and

and there he remained for several years on the staff of the army; while Mr. Everard had continued his residence on the property he had purchased, living almost wholly secluded from the world, until the recent return of Julia to her father's mansion had tended to fill the void which he had long felt, and to revive, by her presence and her gaiety, some portion of that cheerfulness which he possessed when she had been blessed by a mother's care.

The chateau which he occupied was situated at the foot of the Jura, in a fertile plain near the frontiers of France and Geneva, in the Pays de Vaud, and at some distance from Lake Leman, which however might be viewed in its whole extent from the building. The edifice itself was of great antiquity, and had been erected as a place of residence for the counts of Savoy, when they held possession of that country; and on its

passing to the government of Berne, was conferred on the noble family of Leaspach, who, in addition to the office of lieutenants or bailiffs of that aristocracy, which gave them extensive and absolute local jurisdiction, claimed in their own right sovereign authority over large domains, which in the course of centuries they had been enabled to acquire, by the enormous profits arising from their public employ.

The revolution effected in 1798, by which the Vaudois threw off the yoke to which they had submitted for ages, had obliged the baron de Leaspach to abandon the country, and dispose of his property; but although the feudal rights had been abolished by the new government, the chateau still retained its ancient attributes, and possessed that severe character which appertained to a period when tyranny sought security within its walls against an oppressed population,

population, and acts of cruelty were but too frequently transacted in silence and secresy beneath its roof.

Entering by a regular and spacious court-yard in front of the chateau, the first object that met the eye was an isolated tower, the height of which was inconsiderable but which sunk deep below the surface, containing several stories of subterranean apartments, destined as places of confinement to those who refused or neglected the services or dues required of them as vassals. Beneath the chateau were the prisons allotted to offenders of a higher class, or to the objects of baronial vengeance and hatred; and the appellation of "*La Torture*," still appropriated to the obscure and numerous dungeons, too plainly indicated its former purpose. Connected with these dank and terrific abodes, were a variety of communications, many of which secretly conducted to the private chambers

the proprietor; by which means his cruelty might be gratified without personal peril, in witnessing the pain inflicted on his captives, or he might overhear their discourse unseen, and defeat thereby the conspiracies and combinations, to which arbitrary power, unrestrainedly exercised, constantly gave rise among a groaning and enslaved peasantry.

Two suites of airy apartments, fitted up in a more modern and lighter style than the other parts of the building, had been devoted to the ordinary purposes of the family, or occupied when the purposes of pomp did not require the use of the state-rooms, whose extent and sober grandeur were but little adapted for a limited society. Of these, the saloon, or room of state, was the most remarkable, from its great dimensions; it was entered by a large hall through several folding doors, tending to the security of the proprietors, and to repel the severe cold

cold of a Swiss winter. Its furniture and ornaments corresponded with the purposes to which it had been formerly devoted, and to the wealth, power, and magnificence of its ancient and lordly owners. The tapestry was of the darkest green, and confined by cornices and bands of wood, richly gilt and sculptured; the floor was of polished oak, while high Venetian mirrors reflected the massive girandole that hung from the centre of the ceiling, and the numerous gilt branches which projected from the sides of the room. Ponderous tables of black marble were disposed in different parts of the chamber, whose solid and richly-carved supporters were profusely adorned with the arms of the various branches of the family. An ancient clock, inlaid in ivory and ebony, a cabinet of tortoiseshell and silver, vases of white and yellow alabaster, with escutcheons executed in Florentine Mosaic, were the appropriate ornaments that decorated the tables.

Immense fauteuils of carved oak, the seats and backs of which were composed of velvet, embroidered in gold, were ranged around the room; while two large Gothic windows of coloured glass at its extremity displayed the shield of Berne, on which was seen the bear, surmounted by the ducal crown, and that of the family of Leaspach. The banqueting-room adjoining was of less dimensions, and fitted up in a lighter style; beyond which was the state bedchamber, or the shipwreck-room, so termed from the subject represented by its antique tapestry. The last apartment was seldom resorted to, in consequence of the prejudices and fears of the domestics, which had been excited by the reports of a heinous crime having been perpetrated within its walls, and the pales of supernatural appearances and unearthly noises often said to have been seen and heard there. A long corridor extended from the main building along one

one of its wings, on which opened several rooms, and which was terminated by an apartment still used as a library, and well stored with ancient and modern works, and adorned with many rare and excellent specimens of sculpture and painting. In the rear of the chateau, gardens, adorned with fountains, were seen descending by successive terraces to the banks of a wide and rapid river, which rising in the mountains, directed its course to the lake, in passing in the immediate vicinity of the building.

On the evening of the day in which Mr. Everard had taken his departure from the chateau, to proceed on his journey to England, the arrival of sister Mary was announced, and Julia flew to the embrace of one whom she regarded with the warmest affection, while her visitor long and fondly pressed to her bosom, her who had for years shared her love, and been the constant object of her

tenderest solicitude at the convent of St. Ursule. With delight she saw the improvement that had taken place in the person of her former pupil since they had been separated. To monsieur De Rougemont she was well known, as that gentleman exercised the office of confessor to the conventual establishment, and he had long admired the accomplished mind and manner, and learned to respect the meekness, patience, and resignation, with which she denied herself the converse of the world, and had submitted to withdraw from society, at an age, and with qualifications, which would have enabled her to be considered as its pride and ornament. A strong feeling of sympathy was also excited in him, by the communications he had received under the sacred seal of confession; but to him alone had her sorrows been confided, as the inhabitants of the convent and chateau were wholly ignorant of their cause or origin.

It

It was some time after the close of the Irish rebellion, that she had presented herself at the convent of St. Ursule, furnished with letters of recommendation to the abbess, who received her with every mark of respect and attention; and readily accorded her desire of being permitted to enter on the conventual list as a boarder.

The establishment of the Helvetic republic at the same period, supported by the arms of revolutionary France, had for some time threatened to affect many of the institutions of the Roman Catholic cantons; and it was only by the utmost prudence in their conduct, and by a pliant conformity, as far as it was allowable with the spirit of the times, that they did not share the fate which attended those of the neighbouring countries. Amongst the novel arrangements they were obliged to introduce in conventual discipline, was that of receiving

boarders on the footing of professed religious, but without being enchained by the severer restrictions to which the latter were subjected; and this measure had been adopted and sanctioned, in consequence of the odium with which profession for life began to be regarded. With the conventual title, this class of boarders imitated the seclusion and privations of the nuns; but the duration of those observances were wholly voluntary, and they could be at any moment abandoned, without a violation of the rules of their communion.

On entering St. Ursule's, the new boarder adopted the appellation of sister Mary, and her manners and conduct soon ensured her the esteem and affection of its members; but even in the sacred precincts of monastic retirement, worldly curiosity will enter; nor can human passion be effectually lulled asleep, or human infirmity overcome.

To

To avert the effects of malice and of envy, which were regularly displayed by the devout sister Justine towards each new comer, the abbess had been obliged to confide to the censorious saint a morsel of their history; and this privilege, by flattering her pride, frequently succeeded in checking her slander: she therefore learned that sister Mary had, by the unfortunate rebellion which agitated Ireland, lost many relatives who had been compromised in that unhappy struggle; and that she had been deprived of an only daughter, on whom she doated, whose loss had so greatly affected her, that she had determined to seek in seclusion the restoration of her peace. She had taken up her residence in the convent some time after Julia had been placed there, to whom she became warmly attached; while her pupil became so devoted to the will of her new friend and preceptress, that she repaid by her progress the instructions which

sister

sister Mary zealously laboured to instill.

Of her attentions to his child, and the great advantage derived from them, Mr. Everard became peculiarly sensible; and on her return from occasional visits to the chateau, the little Julia bore with her abundant proofs of her father's anxiety to acknowledge the kindness of her friend; and all that could contribute to the comfort of sister Mary was equally sought by him, to evince the gratitude he felt. These presents were always accepted with a degree of satisfaction, that proved that she was still susceptible to the attentions of friendship: but although Mr. Everard had frequently endeavoured personally to express the sense he entertained of her kindness, she constantly declined an interview, on the ground of having engaged herself to abstain from society.

On

On Julia's quitting the convent, her grief was excessive; and so much was she endeared to sister Mary, that her absence affected her spirits; and at length her health perceptibly and gradually declined, so far as to alarm the sisterhood, all of whom, not now excepting sister Justine, felt an attachment for the invalid. It was at this moment that Julia's invitation was received, and although, in adherence to her resolution of avoiding society, she was at first disposed to deny herself the only pleasure she was permitted to enjoy, yet the sincere and zealous persuasions of the abbess and her flock, prevailed in inducing her to abandon her determination; and she consented to take up her residence at the chateau of Leaspach until Mr. Everard's return.

Sister Mary still retained much of that beauty for which she had been evidently distinguished; but if sorrow had diminished

nished the brilliancy of her former charms, and if melancholy had destroyed the traces of that animation which must once have lighted up her features, they had impressed them with a pensive character, that could not fail to interest all who beheld her. Her accomplished manners indicated that she had moved in the first society, while the sweetness of her disposition attracted affection as much as it ensured respect. On her arrival at the chateau, she was much agitated, owing to the lengthened seclusion to which she had been devoted, and the pleasure derived from the meeting with Julia; but her emotion gradually subsided, and she was welcomed by monsieur De Rougemont with every mark of pleasure and esteem.

Ere the supper was ended, Julia was informed that Fritz, who had accompanied her father as far as the town of Orbe in the morning, had just returned; and

and anxious to have the latest intelligence of her parent, she desired him to be admitted; and the old man shortly after entered.

"How did you leave my father, Fritz?" Julia eagerly demanded.

"I left him at Orbe, my lady, in the best health, and ready to proceed on his journey with the colonel; I have here a letter, which his honour desired——"

The unfinished sentence rested on his lips; he suddenly changed colour—his limbs trembled—and his gaze seemed fixed upon some object, from which it could not be withdrawn.

"What is the matter, old man?" exclaimed monsieur De Rougemont, hastily rising to his aid, as he observed the old man scarcely able to support himself; "fatigue has overpowered him—repose yourself a moment."

Julia

Julia administered a glass of wine to the aged domestic, which had the effect of restoring his speech, if not his composure, as he still seemed excessively agitated. Monsieur De Rougemont was obliged to lead him from the room, and directed that he should be conducted to his bed, and that every care and attention should be shewn him.

"I am certain that Fritz's mind has been of late disturbed," said Julia; "this morning his conduct was scarcely that of a reasonable being. The visit of the stranger seems to have affected his senses, as I am informed, since his arrival, he has displayed the utmost vicissitude of temper—using the most incoherent expressions, and soliloquizing in terms perfectly incomprehensible to those around him."

"The departure of his master," answered monsieur De Rougemont, "has most probably had an effect upon his spirits;

spirits; but ere I retire to rest, I shall make a point of seeing him, and have no doubt that repose will restore his disturbed faculties."

He soon took leave of the ladies, and Julia was rejoiced to indulge in private the pleasure of conversing with her friend. Retiring to the ancient state bedchamber, which she had chosen, during her father's absence, to be near her visitor, they remained until a late hour in discourse.

When she arose the succeeding morning, she repaired to the chamber of her friend, but she had already quitted it; and Julia was on the point of descending to the breakfast-room, when she heard voices in her father's library; but on entering, she discovered that her visitor was there, and that the old servant must have been the person whose conversation attracted her attention. On saluting

saluting her friend, she inquired respecting the health of Fritz.

"Thank God, my lady, I feel better to-day than I have done for many a year; and my old heart, which I thought withered and dead, bounds as it did the first day I ever shouldered, and the last that I held a musket."

"I am delighted to hear it, Fritz," replied Julia, "although your disorder has been to me inexplicable; for as soon as your master leaves us, you become gay and cheerful, and we might almost be led to believe that his absence was a source of pleasure."

"Say not so, my dear young lady; my hairs have been whitened in the service of his honour, and for many a year I have borne with me a heavy heart; but it has not been age which has turned me grey, nor selfish feeling that has brought me grief; 'twas when I saw my master, in the prime of life, weighed down

down by calamities which seldom occur to the longest liver, but which fell upon him at one blow, that my spirit was unstrung; and it was the remembrance of happier times that daily vexed me for his sake, that I lost all taste for mirth; but should they return, or should the dawn of better days appear, I shall still be happy; and nothing is impossible to him who has afflicted us."

While the old man spoke, the eyes of sister Mary were directed to the portrait of Mr. Everard, representing him when much younger, and in his military dress; the words of Fritz had naturally called her attention to what she presumed to be the image of him of whom he spoke, and as she listened to him, the tears of sympathy rolled down her cheeks.

"It is my father's portrait," said Julia, striving to divert the observations of the old

old man, "taken many years since, and the resemblance is very strong, although he is certainly much changed, particularly in the expression of his countenance. He has no longer the lively air by which he was then distinguished; and seriousness and reserve now mark the countenance once so animated."

"I would have thought," observed sister Mary, "that in the tranquil retirement you enjoy, little could have occurred to affect your father so materially."

"Our retreat has been rather the effect of his melancholy than their cause; I was so young when they occurred, that I have not the remembrance of them; and they have impressed my father's mind so deeply, that he never reverts to them; and his silence has been ever sufficient to prevent any reference to them on my part."

"And

"And your mother?" said sister Mary.

"My mother——" she replied; but here Fritz, in letting fall the massive fire-irons which he held with a crash, that not only produced a shriek from the ladies, but shook the apartment with the force of an earthquake, put a stop to Julia's reply.

"Mr. Everard was in the army?" said sister Mary, whom the danger of the brazen instruments had frightened from her former question.

"He was," answered Julia; "but so seldom does he allude to the past, that I cannot even inform you what rank he held in it.—In what regiment was my father, Fritz?"

"His honour was in the seventh, my lady; but the uniform he is painted in is that of the staff, when under general Montrose in London; it was done by a great painter, who was terribly angry when his honour sat for it with major Montrose,

Montrose, as the major did all in his power to put his honour out of countenance. It seems to me but yesterday; his honour was placed as it may be here, and you, my lady, said——"

"I don't think, Fritz," said Julia, interrupting him, "that my conversation at that age can be of particular interest; therefore we will dispense with the instruction my observations might be little calculated to afford."

The old man seemed confused, when aware of his absurdity, and left the room without reply. When he was gone, Julia continued—"A mother's care I have never known; nor can I say in what manner I was deprived of her; yet I have long learned that it is her loss which so powerfully affected my father, and that the remembrance of her is not obliterated from his mind. Strange as it may appear, I have never dared to mention her name, although my memory clings with avidity to the slight trace

trace it has preserved of her—so slight, that even the remembrance of her features has vanished; and all that I can recall is, the last kiss she ever gave me. From that moment I never saw her more."

"Then her fate remains a mystery?" observed sister Mary.

"Long I had reason to believe her dead, but an involuntary exclamation of my father within these last few days, leads me to think that she is yet living, and is connected with the journey he has undertaken; but although my heart beat high with hope as I heard it, I dared not question him."

"Would he have forborne to satisfy you on the subject?"

"I cannot say; but so strongly are his words engraved upon my mind, when, many years since, and while a child, I spoke of my mother, that I would not presume to violate the command he then imposed upon me. I

was playing with a doll which he had given me, and in my childish manner, had put it in its bed, while my father sat smiling at the serious care I took of his present, and the sage advice I bestowed upon the inanimate puppet; as I kissed the image, in recommending it to rest, the remembrance of my mother flashed upon my mind, and I could not help saying—'But I will come again, and not leave you, as did my mamma, the last time that she kissed me, and never more returned to papa or me.' My father hastily arose, and paced the chamber for some time; then, having seated himself, he called me to him, and placing me upon his knee, enjoined me, in the mildest, but most solemn terms, never again to mention the circumstance before him, or even pronounce my mother's name. Young as I was, the melancholy that marked his countenance, the tone of grief with which he spoke, and the pain I had evidently excited

excited in his breast, were not forgotten; and I have not since dared to violate his orders, or oppose his desire on the subject."

"Let us hope she lives," said sister Mary.

"Yes, I live in hope," said Julia; "and if ever it were permitted me once more to embrace her, I should be the most blest of human creatures. My nightly prayers, since I have had reason to think that she still breathes, has been to be once more the object of a mother's care."

Julia wept bitterly; and sister Mary was also affected. The coincidence of Julia's story with her own—for she had lost a daughter, who was tenderly beloved, in early life—and her sorrow, though calmed by time and religion, was still great; and in pressing Julia to her bosom, it seemed as if, in the motherless girl, the object of her former love,

and of her long regret, had been restored to her; and all a parent's feeling revived in her favour, as she concluded her discourse.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

——— Weak minds, who court opinion,
And, dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants
In pompous affectation.

Isabella, Act III. Scene 1.

The Italian.

Two months had passed, during which the harmony that reigned over the inhabitants of the chateau had not been disturbed, and the tranquil tenor of the lives of its inhabitants afforded little of variety or interest.

Mr. Everard had written, on his arrival in Holland, stating that he had pursued his journey thither in safety, notwithstanding the danger and difficulty

attending his line of route, caused by the entry of the allied troops on the French territory, in the early part of the memorable year 1814.

The spring had now arrived in the plains of the Pays de Vaud, although the Alps gave, as yet, no sign of its approach; and the country exhibited all the luxuriant appearance that the vernal season there presents. The lake, no longer agitated by the storms of winter, invited to excursions upon its calm and beautiful surface; while the rivers became more swoln and rapid, from the melting of the mountain snows. The vine began to shoot, and to demand the care of the husbandman, to promote, by cultivation, the growth of the fruit, which forms his wealth. The general call to industry and labour renewed the air of general content which distinguishes the active race, whose employ is attend-

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ed by cheerfulness, and whose travail is lightened by gaiety and mirth.

The first announcement of the warm season is indicated by the thunder-storms that arise from the chain of Jura, and which heralds in the summer, and generally dispels the fears of the peasant, that his pains may be counteracted by the return of severe cold.

The day had closed mildly, and no cloud was to be seen, as the setting sun beamed on the lake, and lighted up the hoary head of Mont Blanc; but while all nature was calm, and presented herself under her loveliest features, a low and distant noise, long, and scarcely perceptible, told the more experienced native that ere long its glories would be obscured, and that it was necessary to provide against the threatened fury of the elements.

For hours no symptom became visible above the horizon of the approaching change; but a sound as of distant cannon foretold the magnitude of the tempest, that vainly, as yet, endeavoured to surmount the mighty chain of the Jura; and the peasant, seen hastening to his home, or endeavouring rapidly to place his cattle in security, evinced his dread of the visitation. A slight rustling of the leaves, hitherto undisturbed, gave notice of the vicinity of the clouds, which soon, in black and successive masses, appeared upon the brow of the mountain, where, after resting for a time, were shortly driven impetuously forward, as the Alpine barrier was overcome, and with incessant peals, that shook the chateau to its centre, overspread the plains, and obscured the whole horizon. The fierce and forked lightnings were seen in every direction, illuminating, for an instant, the line of Alps, and shewing the waters of the lake

lake foaming beneath the fury of the gale, and as quickly enveloping all in darkness, while the crash that immediately succeeded proved the nearness of the danger.

Julia, long accustomed to scenes of such terrific grandeur, watched the progress of the storm at the casement, while sister Mary and monsieur De Rougemont were employed in reading, until a flash of lightning, that illuminated the apartment with a sudden blaze, was followed by a fearful sound without, which announced that the volley of heaven's artillery had not fallen harmless, but had been the instrument of near destruction.

Julia, almost stunned by the explosion, crossed herself in affright, and ejaculated a prayer to the Virgin, while monsieur De Rougemont rushed towards her, apprehensive that she had

received injury from the shock. She however shortly recovered, and during the deep and awful silence that had succeeded, as if the clouds had exhausted their materials of destruction, they looked anxiously around, to ascertain where the rage of the thunder had been spent. A few moments shewed them the pines near the road in a blaze, and, as the flame increased, it threw its crimson glare far and wide, and formed an awful contrast with the dark face of heaven above.

While they regarded the spectacle, Julia thought she perceived, by its light, something at a distance on the road, and pointing it out to monsieur De Rougemont, he could distinctly ascertain a carriage, that appeared to be overturned, with some persons near it, who were probably unable to learn whither to direct their steps. Fearful of accident, the servants were instantly summoned, and

and dispatched towards the spot; but as they quitted the chateau, the rain suddenly fell in torrents, and, in soon extinguishing the fire, prevented them longer witnessing the objects that had attracted their attention.

They awaited long and anxiously the return of the domestics; but the storm had recommenced, while, with the rain which still continued, they could neither ascertain, by sight or hearing, what had occurred. After some time, a loud knocking at the gate of the court-yard told their arrival, and the sound of several voices announced that they were not unaccompanied. Monsieur De Rougemont hastened to receive them, and render any necessary aid; and soon reentered, accompanied by two gentlemen, one of whom was supported by his companion, and had evidently met with an accident, as he walked with pain and difficulty. His figure was tall

and spare; he might be about the age of forty, and had the air of a man of rank, which was soon confirmed by his announcing himself as the marchese Graziani di Casa Dorata, a Sardinian nobleman, who, in proceeding to an estate he possessed in the Milanese territory, had been overturned in his carriage, by the horses taking fright at the lightning. The injury he had received prevented much notice to be taken of his companion; and it was not until the return of monsieur De Rougemont with him, after seeing the marchese to a chamber, that he attracted the attention of his hosts.

Major Beauclerc was an officer, who, at the commencement of his military career, had been ordered with the earliest of our expeditions to the Spanish Peninsula, where he had been subsequently employed during that lengthened campaign; and having frequently distinguished

distinguished himself, and participated in the dangers which had proved fatal to many of his companions in arms, found himself, at an early age, invested with rank which is seldom attainable at that period of life. At the termination of the war, he had been expedited, by the commander-in-chief, with dispatches for Genoa, where British troops were stationed, whither he hastened; but on arriving at the frontier of France, the extraordinary demand for horses made by the allies, had impeded, and would have arrested for some time, his progress, if the marchese Graziani, who was on his way to Milan, had not pressed him to partake in the use of his horses, an offer which he accepted; and it was near the chateau that his course had been stopped by the accident which has been mentioned.

To a handsome and commanding person, he joined the advantages of talent and

and professional skill; while his manners, which were equally marked by the elegance acquired in polished society, and by the frankness of a soldier, tended to produce at once an impression highly in his favour. On entering the room, he apologized for their intrusion on the hospitality of the chateau, in relating the circumstances of their misfortune.

During the evening, he entertained his guests with a relation of the interesting events which had attended the conclusion of the campaign in France; and the hours passed rapidly away, while he recounted, in detail, the circumstances that promised peace at length to the exhausted nations of Europe, and held out the olive branch of hope to monsieur De Rougemont of soon revisiting his native land; so that the earliest signs of morning were exhibited ere the party separated to retire to rest.

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On their next meeting, major Beauclerc informed them that his companion, the marchese, was much better, but that he feared the effects of the shock he had received would oblige him to claim, for some short time more, their indulgence; but that for himself, he intended immediately to proceed to the next town, and prosecute a mission which admitted as little delay as possible.

At this moment monsieur De Rougemont entered the room, and announced that the carriage had suffered so much damage as to render it impossible to be put in proper order during the day; and he earnestly pressed major Beauclerc to prolong his visit, as, although other conveyances might be procured, the difference of time which would occur between obtaining them, and the repair of the vehicle in which he travelled, would be but trifling, and fully counterbalanced by the opportunity of present

sent repose, and of ultimately proceeding in his own carriage.

After apologizing for his encroachment on their hospitality, the major readily acceded to the invitation. The day passed delightfully at the chateau, and all parties seemed equally anxious to render their temporary meeting as agreeable as possible, and to compensate for its brevity by its charms.

With strict attention to those graces which enliven, adorn, and bind society, the major could boast the possession of the most honourable principles. Formed by nature, as induced by temper and education, to please, he spurned those artificial acquirements which are too often gained by the sacrifice of sincerity, and the relinquishment of truth; and with a generous disposition, a warm heart, and a practical knowledge of the world, few were so well qualified to attract

tract and ensure esteem. From the moment he beheld Julia, she had excited in him sentiments of admiration, which were heightened by a more intimate knowledge with the many accomplishments of her mind. She resembled at this moment, in every respect, what her unfortunate mother had been at the period of her marriage; and limited as was the sphere in which she had hitherto moved, her society had been select, her education of the highest character; and to purity of mind, and innocence of heart, she joined every grace that could adorn her sex or station. With that enthusiasm which gilds the scene of life, she added a portion of the melancholy which had so long swayed her father, and which frequent speculations on the mystery of a mother's fate were calculated to prolong. Except with her father, or with sister Mary, she had, since her residence in Switzerland, but little communication with those who owned

owned as theirs the land that gave her birth; but she had adequate knowledge, from reading and instruction, of their national qualities; and in her father she contemplated an example, which led her to judge with the fondest predilection of England.

When a child, and on her partial visits at the chateau, her pleasure was to listen, during the nights of winter, to the tales of Fritz, who, himself not the best judge of English character, nor calculated, in his foreign accent, adequately to become an historian, redeemed the defect by invention, and supplied his want of knowledge by his eloquence. From the spirit-peopled mountains and vallies of his native land, he drew supplies to compensate for his ignorance, and gave to the past, a colouring well suited to the spot and season in which his tales were told. Education had however long removed the veil with which

which Fritz's fancy had clothed her land's history; but still early impressions were not wholly obliterated; and the proud and noble qualities of her countrymen were heightened by high and chivalrous attainments, which placed them in her imagination as a superior order of beings to those whom she generally beheld. Nor let the enthusiasm of youthful fancy be deemed unnatural or extravagant, for we may appeal to the rich and poetic colouring the picture presented to the mind of one, whom exiled from much to which his hopes, and heart, and spirit was attached,—one on whose brow maturer age had marked in deeper characters the number of his years and cares,—one, who gave expression to his misanthropic feelings amid the desolation of the neighbouring Alps —one, who long unused to the music of his land's language, looked back with regret and sorrow at the scenes he left, and contemplated with lingering affection,

tion, the bright and glorious prospect from which he had severed himself, under the influence of that gloomy and discontented hour, when his darkened temper led the lordly poet to seek that repose he was never doomed to know on foreign strands, and amid barbarian hordes.

In her guest, Julia recognized, as correct, the qualities with which she had invested the objects upon which her imagination had dwelt. The heroic and more graceful attributes with which she had decked them, were not wanting in him she regarded; they were too prominent not to be acknowledged—too valuable not to be justly appreciated—too amiable not to produce impressions of the most favourable nature. Whatever were their effects upon the heart and mind of Julia, it is certain, that when major Beauclere bid them farewell at night, in the intent of pursuing his journey

journey the next morning at daybreak, she remained long thoughtful and silent; and she was not aroused from her reverie, until a deep and involuntary sigh, in attracting the attention of sister Mary, led her to inquire if she was unwell.

Julia hastily replied in the negative, and with some confusion of manner, which her friend seemed not to notice, she soon retired to her apartment.

Day broke upon the distant Alps, and the first blush of morning shewed the calm and peaceful surface of the lake, as major Beauclerc prepared to leave the chateau of Leaspach. As he passed through the court-yard to gain his carriage, he could not refrain bestowing a last glance on the tower where the apartments of Julia were situated, and where he beheld a female form, which hastily retreated from the casement on being

being observed. He paused, in hope of its return; but it did not reappear; and he left the court, trusting that it had been Julia who had attracted his attention, and who, at that early hour, had left her couch to witness his departure.

Disappointed in the expectation of her reappearance, he yet cherished the remembrance of the circumstance, as a promise of hope; for beautiful as were the attractions of all nature at that moment—modest as he presumed his claims on her, he could not but desire that interest for him had called her from her repose; and having once admitted the idea, he adhered to it, with the tenacity with which early passion clings to each object that formed to give it birth. Nor was he incorrect. The sleep of Julia had been disturbed; her dreams were occupied but with one object; and when she awoke, it filled her mind until rest abandoned her.

As

As she heard the preparations for the departure of her visitor, she sighed once more to behold one who had excited an unusual and novel interest in her bosom. Leaving her couch, she saw him from the casement, pass below: but she repented the indulgence she had permitted herself, as she beheld him cast a farewell look towards the spot she occupied. Short as had been her acquaintance with major Beauclerc, the feelings he had inspired were ardent and sincere; and they had arisen rather from the appreciation of the noble qualities he possessed, than from an unsettled and wandering taste, which sickens for want of novelty, and is prepared to fix its hopes on every passing meteor. Those whom she had beheld beyond her paternal walls bore no relation to the gentlemanly and amiable qualities of her father, or of monsieur De Rougemont; they were the hardy but unpolished productions of a ruder clime, fitted to the

the sterile soil whereon they lived, with some simple virtues, but with all the grossness of less civilized nature. In major Beauclerc she admired a high and chivalrous spirit, disinterested feeling, and a generous temper, with all the attractions of manly and polished manners, conferring honour on a profession dear to her by early association.

The wholesome exercise of prudence and caution, when once the intruding spirit of love has become the bosom's guest, in restraining its ravages upon its peace, a resistance to its absolute usurpation, and opposition to a sway which soon becomes tyrannic, and renders its confiding host a fettered slave, were qualities with which Julia was endowed, and which, on the departure of major Beauclerc, she summoned into action. She felt that her happiness was at stake, but she also felt that it was only by calling reason to her aid, that she

she could preserve its integrity; and she so far succeeded, that often as her memory dwelt upon the epoch in which she had seen her visitor, it was with sensations of hope, without having to dread the consequences of disappointment.

"Where are we, Pietro?" demanded the marchese of his valet, on the morning of major Beauclerc's departure. "On what shore have we been cast?—who inhabits the land whereon we have been thrown?—Are they of the *nobiltà*, or of the *canaglia*?"

"I can hardly inform *sua eccellenza*; the master of the house is an *Inglese*, and the servants are as sombre as the fogs of his island; I can make nothing of them."

"Was that the *signore* whom I met on my arrival?"

"*Illustrissimo, non;* that person is a priest, and during the signore's absence,

acts as Cerberus to the chateau; and, in truth, he has a treasure under his care."

"What treasure, *Pietro mio?*"

"Oh! *eccellenza,* one of the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld—a perfect *Madonna*—fair as alabaster, and a cheek brighter than the Po beneath the setting sun."

"You are poetical, *amico mio.* What is her age?"

"That of love, *eccellenza!* Were she transplanted to the soil of Italy, she would outrival all that it can shew, in oval faces, black eyes, and olive complexions: you must see her, *illustrissimo,* to judge."

"Perhaps my accident may yet prove fortunate, but I must behold this English beauty: assist me to dress, Pietro, and I shall hasten into the presence of this divinity; and while I pay my devotions at her shrine, I trust you will not be idle with the domestics. By the way,

way, I am your debtor for the last little service you rendered me: take these Napoleons, and let not your zeal relax; for every Danæ you bring, comes attended, as far as you are concerned, with her shower of gold."

"*Obligatissimo eccellenza;* you may rely upon my industry and vigilance, *illustrissimo;* but—but, *questi Inglesi* have not the freedom of the Italians; they are difficult and irritable."

"*Coraggio, Pietro*—the more danger, the more glory; but we will speak more upon the subject when I have reconnoitered the enemy. In the mean time, prepare for love's campaign: commence the mine below, while I attack the ramparts; and, if victorious, the myrtle will well supply the place of the laurel."

After this dialogue, the marchese descended to the saloon, where he found the family assembled. To the females

he paid his respects, with that pompous ceremony, and extravagant obsequiousness, which yet characterize the manners of the higher order of Italians; while forgetful of the former attentions of monsieur De Rougemont, he received his congratulations on the amendment of his health, with repulsive haughtiness and supercilious gravity.

He appeared, as we have said, about the age of forty; the cast of his features indicated his nation, and his general appearance would have been prepossessing, had it not been for the sinister and doubtful expression of his eyes, which, shaded by large, dark, and overhanging eyebrows, were calculated, by their regard, to create suspicion, if not fear. Towards Julia, his attentions were directed, with a degree of earnestness and boldness to which she had not been accustomed; and she trembled at the fixed and insolent regard with which he observed

observed her, qualified as it was by a profusion of unmeaning compliments.

Monsieur De Rougemont saw her pain, and endeavoured to divert the notice of his guest, and relieve his pupil:—"*Il signore marchese* has been recently in France?" he demanded.

"*Si signore,*" was the laconic response.

"It is to be hoped that the unhappy circumstances which have so long affected the peace of that fine country are near their termination?"

"*Certamente.*"

"Has the *signore marchese* visited Switzerland before?"

"*Non,* signore."

"It will afford me pleasure, if my services may be useful in pointing out to the signore marchese any of the remarkable and interesting objects by which we are surrounded."

"*Molto tenuto,* signore."

Finding it impossible to procure an amplification of the marchese's eloquence or civility, monsieur De Rougemont, with inward contempt of his guest, was obliged to allow him to pursue his conversation with Julia, although it evidently rendered her uneasy. He however failed not to observe strictly his motions; while the latter, conscious of the scrutiny to which he was subjected, endeavoured, by an air of haughty indifference, or a look of effrontery, to shun or defy observation: but the calm regard of the priest continued unaffected by pretended contempt, or open anger.

The day concluded differently to the preceding one. The visitor appeared vain, haughty, supercilious, and designing; his observations, pronounced with the utmost emphasis, were mean and common-place, and indicated a sterile and uncultivated mind; the equivocal sense of many of his expressions denoted

noted a want of morality, almost of decency; his selfishness bore evidence to his want of feeling for others; and when she retired to rest, Julia could not but sigh, on comparing the tediousness of that day with the pleasure of that which she had passed in the company of major Beauclerc.

CHAPTER VI.

Their level life is but a mould'ring fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire.
The Traveller.

The Cretin.

If monsieur De Rougemont had been doomed to support the insolence of the Italian noble, the domestics of the chateau had to undergo a similar ordeal, in the impertinence of the valet, on his deigning to join them, for the first time, at supper.

In the number of those employed in the chateau, was one of those unhappy beings denominated Cretins, who exist in quantity in the Valais, and are to be found

found in several parts of the Canton de Vaud. He had for some years been retained in the family of Mr. Everard, where he owed his introduction to his having, by an act of self-devotion and courage, saved the life of Julia, at the imminent hazard of his own.

Descending the Jura on horseback, some years before, the animal she rode had taken fright, and quitting the road, rushed with the utmost speed and fury towards a precipice, where an instant and fearful death awaited her. At the moment that hope had abandoned her, the Cretin, who had been watching his goats near the spot, rushed forward, and by means of the almost supernatural strength with which he was endued, arrested the terrified animal in his course, and restrained him until Julia was enabled to free herself from the stirrup—which she had no sooner done, than the horse, which had continued to press for-

ward, leapt the rock, dragging him who had rescued her beyond its edge. Luckily a projecting root was seized by him; and while the animal met his fate beneath, the Cretin was preserved; and soon stood by the side of the terrified Julia, anxiously regarding her whom he had saved, while his unnatural and savage appearance inspired Julia with fresh alarm, which only subsided on the arrival of her servant.

He was short of stature, but extremely athletic: denied the power of speech or hearing, but possessed of intelligence, he expressed himself by sign and sound, equally singular and uncouth; his thick and black hair was closely matted, and fell low upon his face, while his neck was dreadfully deformed by several prominent and hideous goitres. When animated by pleasure or anger, by rage or joy, his eyes presented the wildest and most unnatural glare, and were sufficient

ficient to imbue with terror those unused to his character.

With all these natural disadvantages, he was remarkably quick of apprehension and perception, but seldom noticed what was passing around him, if his attention were not demanded, except when the discourse turned upon the members of the chateau, and then he would give the discussion his closest attention, judging by the turns of countenance, the expressions of the eyes, the movement of the lips, and by general gesture, of the sentiments which were promulged, to which he would afford the deepest and most intense interest, and correspond with those who conversed, by contortions of feature, which presented the most frightful picture.

When desirous of communicating his ideas, his actions, however strange and extravagant they might be, fully and

clearly conveyed them; and when his choler was excited, his fury and violence surpassed all bounds; and to motions that indicated the utmost rage, were joined inarticulate and unusual sounds, as unnatural as terrific. His force was astonishing, and when impelled, he would give evidence of physical strength, which could scarcely be credited.

The obligations which he had conferred upon the family, his inoffensive character, unwearied industry, and readiness to oblige, had rendered Cavel (as he was called) a favourite with the household; and he always found friends ready to avert from him those insults which the thoughtless or hard-hearted were frequently inclined to cast upon him.

To Julia his respect almost approached to adoration; she was almost the goddess of his idolatry. She had been constant

stant in attendance, and had administered the medicines prescribed for him during a long illness, with her own hands; and he at all times demonstrated that his gratitude would extend, if required, to the sacrifice of life itself.

Such was one of the members to whom the condescending but insolent valet, after having affectedly saluted all the company, addressed himself in turn, in applying his lorgnette to recognize his features; but by flippant and coxcomical airs, became ludicrously contrasted by the signs of gravity and terror his countenance assumed, as fixed before the Cretin, he strove to recognize what he beheld, without daring to withdraw his affrighted regard.

"*Servo umilissimo*—hem—*signor illustrissimo!*" stuttered the trembling valet, as he retreated, bowing with the utmost

utmost humility, to ensure the favour of the creature whom he saluted.

A growl, which bore extraordinary affinity to the expression of a bear disturbed at refection, and which was intended as a friendly recognition of the Italian's politeness, convinced him that he was in strange company, and moving with extraordinary activity to the door, would have abandoned the society, of which he, a few moments before, considered himself the grace and ornament, had not Fritz arrested his steps, and explained to him the character of the object of his alarm.

In some degree reassured, and anxious to avoid evincing his fears, he assumed the seat at the supper-table; but not without directing, between each mouthful, a suspicious and doubtful glance towards Cavel, who, on his part, by excessive contortions, expressed the amuse-

amusement he derived from the puppyish manners of the liveried dandy.

After having, however, applied himself with zeal to the flask that stood before him, his valour returned, and with it the consciousness of his preeminence to those by whom he was surrounded, whom he vainly strove to astonish, by the frequent application of his mother-o'-pearl lorgnette, his snuff-box of *petit-or*, his ring beset by composition brilliants, and a watch highly ornamented with false pearls.

After having imposed, as he believed, on the apparent simplicity of his associates, he condescended to remember the promise he had made to his honourable employer, of sounding the characters of the family; and relapsing something from his dignified reserve, he at length deigned to honour his hosts by entering into conversation.

"A charm-

"A charming situation this, *signorine mie*," said Pietro, addressing himself to the female domestics; "but must be extremely dull during the long winter months; not comparable in that respect to our *palazzo* of *Casa Dorata*, near Milan, where gaiety reigns throughout the year: yet in such company, I should be almost tempted to risk the horrors of a Swiss Christmas."

"We are highly flattered by the compliment," replied Lisette, one of the females; "but it would be the height of cruelty to deprive the world of such perfection, and bury so much grace and elegance in our rude country."

"Vastly polite, *signora*—extremely honoured; but great as would be the temptation, I would prefer bearing so much beauty as adorns you, to grace our charming Italy, where all is life and love: but here, the continual presence of these bleak and snow-clad mountains, I must confess, would be sufficient to fright

fright me from my purpose. Then, I fear, you are barren of amusement, and time must hang heavy on your hands; whereas at the palazzo, we have a constant round of entertainments—balls, concerts, and the opera. Then, the *divina Bondina*," with an affected sigh, "whose voice enchants the ear, and whose face and figure are incomparable. It was I, *signora*—I myself, who formed her taste for music, and she has ever since been the object of my ardent affection: she vastly resembles *la signora Giulia*."

"We are not at all grateful for the comparison," said Fritz, contemptuously.

"Not that the *signora* has all the accomplishments of the *divina Bondina*—that is not to be expected in an English person—(she is English, I learn, *signore*); they are too dull, cold, and insensible, for an Italian taste. I have been in England for a short time, signore, but I was egregiously tired of the country."

"The

"The feeling was mutual, I dare say," observed Fritz.

"*Perdonate mi, signore;* I had the honour of accompanying the *signora Pinnivicini*, who was *prima donna* at the opera, and my company was eagerly sought by the highest ranks of your nobility; but I could not endure their manners."

"You had less patience, I guess, than they," said Fritz.

"Why, as to that, I was obliged to leave it sooner than I intended; but that's no matter; they have no idea of life—none at all. But to return to my subject: if the signora Giulia were under my hands, I would engage she should soon equal the *divina Bondina*. I should soon render her less cold, formal, and precise."

"You will be so good as to change your discourse, my friend," said Fritz, angrily, "as we are not used to listen to such conversation."

"Mean

"Mean no offence; only repeat the words of *sua eccellenza;* he admires her prodigiously.—'Pietro,' said he, this morning, 'if the young lady were put into training by the little *Giulietta* (a friend of *sua eccellenza*, whom he took from the *La Scala* theatre), she would not disgrace *Casa Dorata;*' and that was a great deal for *sua eccellenza* to declare, as he is extremely fastidious on the point of beauty. I remember when he broke with the *signora Rosa*—it was long before he could find a substitute; but at length, as I said, the Giulietta——"

"I advise you," exclaimed Fritz, angrily, "to follow your master's example, and break with her too at present, or I shall be obliged to stop your impertinence."

"Impertinence!" ejaculated the puppy, with surprise, and summoning all his dignity; "I scorn the term, and disdain to notice the insult of my inferiors. The notice of *sua eccellenza*, I would have

have thought likely to be considered an honour, for his taste has been applauded by all Italy, although I must confess he is too fond of variety: for myself, I must say," he added, in elevating his shirt collar, undoing the fillagree gold buttons of his silk waistcoat, to deposit his hand at ease, and drawling out his words affectedly, " for myself, I must say, that the devil must be in the *divina Bondina*, for keeping me so long to her apron-string, as I am confoundedly nice in my pleasures; indeed, I frequently differ with *sua eccellenza* on his choice. This very day, when he was praising the charms of your *signora Giulia*, I said—' *Eccellenza*, with all deference, were it my own case, I would prefer the *Bondina* to any English girl of them all."

Here the clenched hand of Fritz fell with a degree of force upon the table to electrify the dandy, and at the same moment a sound, resembling the growl of one

one of Polito's lions, at the approach of his supper, made him start from his chair; and before the general alarm had ceased, the Italian was in the rude and energetic embrace of the Cretin, whose swoln eyeballs were fixed upon him, with the glaring expression of unbounded fury, while the object of Cavel's unexpected attentions answered his assailant's glance with a look of horror and perplexity, until he faltered out—"*Caro signore illustrissimo*—Misericordia!"

Another tremendous growl, accompanied by a shake that threatened to eject the spare portion of animation that the valet retained, arrested his supplications, while the unceremonious flight of the double row of fillagrees, an ell of cambric frill, and the mother-o'-pearl lorgnette, from their unfortunate owner, attested the powerful chastisement he was undergoing, and like hollow friends, abandoned their master in his distress.

"*Santa*

"*Santa Maria!*" shrieked the terrified valet—"save me, *sono assassinato! Dio mio—miserecordia!*"

Another growl and shake discharged the gold brooch from its seat of honour, and presented the silk waistcoat, impartially divided in moieties, which flowed on either side as unfurled banners, crowning the Cretin's victory.

Fritz and the other domestics strove to rescue him from his assailant's grasp; but all their efforts were ineffectual; and the despoiled valet seemed doomed to destruction, if Julia had not entered with monsieur De Rougemont, who had been attracted by his cries, and at her command the iron hand of Cavel was loosened from his prey. No sooner did the victim find himself at liberty, than he fled the apartment, with a degree of velocity which gave efficacy to the credit of the Cretin's touch.

From

From the state of confusion into which all parties had been thrown, an inquiry into the circumstances was deferred by monsieur De Rougemont, until the next morning, when, on his demanding it, he promised the marchese that the apparent outrage should be properly explained.

The ensuing day, the marchese appeared at the breakfast-table with a sullen and discontented air, and the angry glances, and bitter expressions, directed from time to time at monsieur De Rougemont, told that gentleman that his guest's dignity had been considered as violated, and that he must expect an explanation, which wounded pride threatened to render disagreeable. On his part, however, he had not been idle, as he had investigated fully the cause of the scene he had witnessed the preceding evening, in which the language of the valet had been properly displayed.

From

From this and other circumstances, he was prepared to encounter the anger of the marchese, whom he was now induced to regard with contempt, and whose absence he desired as soon as possible. His attentions to Julia had been so pointed, as greatly to distress her, and monsieur De Rougemont had been under the necessity of repressing them, to the indignation of the haughty Italian, while information had been given by major Beauclerc, prior to his departure, that proved, during their short acquaintance, his doubts respecting the honour and character of his associate. From another source, information had also been derived, which threw some light on certain political transactions of the marchese, during the turbulent and unsettled period to which we have alluded; and it was in consequence of circumstances which compromised his safety, that he had but just quitted the French territory. Anxious, if possible, to get rid

rid of so unacceptable a guest, without violating the laws of hospitality, the priest rather rejoiced in the evident discontent manifested by the marchese, without dreading the expression of his anger.

As soon as the ladies had left the room, the noble, turning with affected dignity, addressed monsieur De Rougemont.—"I hope, *signore ecclesiastico*, that the promise you made of an explanation, respecting the offence offered me, in the person of my domestic, will be fulfilled. It is fit, *signore preté*, that you should know, that the *marchese Graziani di Casa Dorata* is the last person to submit to an insult, and the first to demand an apology."

"Without entering upon the nature of your general sentiments or conduct, allow me, sir, to state, that in the occurrence of last night, much as I regret it, I cannot perceive any insult to you,

but merely the unavoidable consequences attached to the impertinence of your domestic."

"For the conduct of Pietro I am responsible, *signore preté;* and an outrage on my servant is an injury to myself."

"If you mean, sir, to identify yourself with his cause, I beg to observe to the master, what I should have stated to the menial, that the chastisement he received was the merited recompence of his insolence."

"Were you not a priest," said the marchese, rising with fury, and menacing monsieur De Rougemont by his gestures, as he paced the room.

"Were I not," replied he, "you would not dare to threaten me."

"Dare! dare!" repeated the infuriated Italian; "*diavolo!* am I to be thus insulted by the satellite of some English trader,—some vulgar British shopkeeper, who in charity retains him! Do

you

you know to whom you speak?—whom you presume to insult?"

"Signore marchese," said monsieur De Rougemont, "my profession, if not respectable in your eyes, is sacred in mine. We wander uselessly from the subject, to which I beg to recall your attention. During the absence of the proprietor of this chateau, I have become his substitute; and he has honoured me with the care of his interests and his family. Observations of the most offensive nature were applied to the daughter of Mr. Everard, by your servant; and it was only after repeated warnings he met the punishment of his insolence. In the situation in which I am placed, any apology would be more improper on my part, than it would be on your own."

"On mine!"

"Yes; should it be true, as your domestic asserted, that the most insulting

of his reflections respecting the young lady were derived from yourself."

"I scorn entering into any further explanation with you, *signore preté.* If I did express myself in terms of admiration *per la giovine signora Inglese,* I would deem her and her dependents honoured by my notice."

"The confident you have adopted may so consider it with yourself, sir; but I have only to state, that as early as your health may permit, you will prevent a recurrence of past and present insults by your departure."

"*Impertinente!* Were it possible, I should quit your roof this moment; but depend upon it, I shall do so as soon as possible. And, let me tell you, *preté,* that my rank and your habit are your protection at this moment; and were your master present, he should learn the consequence of affronting the *marchese Graziani, mercante Inglese!*"

"Spare your epithets, sir, or I shall take

take measures instantly to prevent their repetition."

"Do you know who you dare thus to address?"

"I do!" said monsieur De Rougemont, emphatically, and in a tone which seemed to disconcert the Italian for a moment; "but I shall not, without necessity, take advantage of that knowledge—but shall leave you the benefit of it."

A scowl of inveterate malignity was the only answer to this observation, as the Italian regarded monsieur De Rougemont. Rage and terror seemed struggling for mastery within him; but as he laid his hand upon the lock, in quitting the apartment, he turned, in muttering, in low but audible tones—"You shall live to repent this—and I shall yet have an opportunity of being revenged."

"One word more, sir," said the priest, "and——"

The sentence remained unfinished, for the marchese abruptly disappeared. Nothing further occurred during the day, and all parties were sensibly relieved by the marchese's dining in his chamber; while his domestic also refrained from renewing his acquaintance with the Cretin.

Julia, when she retired for the night, accompanied sister Mary to her room, where she remained in discourse with her friend until a late hour; and it was not until the clock of the chateau had sounded midnight, that she sought her own chamber.

As she entered the gallery, after passing the corridor which led to what was termed Shipwreck Chamber, she thought she heard some noise near her; but being without a light, she could perceive nothing, and hastened on until she arrived in her chamber, where a lamp was burning. Unused to fear, she returned with

with it to the spot where her attention had been attracted by the sound; but nothing appeared to account for it. Feeling but little disposed for rest, she opened the door that led to the ancient banqueting-room adjoining, and drew her chair to the window, which commanded a beautiful and extensive view. The night was cloudless and serene, and the moonbeams illuminated the tranquil surface of the distant Leman, while Mont Blanc reared its snowy diadem, contrasting in its brilliant whiteness the deep azure of the heavens. The wind at periods sang mournfully through the forests of the Jura, while afar off might be heard the chaunt of the *Ranz de vaches*, as the peasant beguiled his early way in proceeding towards the mountain height.

Entranced in the contemplation of the scene, the time passed rapidly until the castle bell tolled the hour of one,

when Julia arose, and sought her room. As she closed the door, a sigh was distinctly heard, and evidently in the apartment. Alarmed, she looked around her, but no object met her sight. Although free from superstition, the tales told of the chamber she inhabited returned to her mind, and she felt awe and terror as her sight rested upon the dark tapestry, where the horrors of a shipwreck were traced with truth and force; and she shuddered as she regarded the expression of horror of those who were delineated on the arras with considerable truth, as struggling with the waves for life. Her imagination became in no small degree affected by the contemplation of objects, to which she had never before given attention; while the history of a foul act of murder, reported to have been transacted within the walls of the chamber, the time of night, and her distance from the family, at length so much alarmed her, that she resolved to seek her

her servant, and make her pass the night in her company.

As she arose and took the lamp, the tapestry moved with violence, and she had no longer any doubt that some intrusion, natural or spiritual, had taken place. Affrighted to the utmost degree, she rushed to the door; but ere she gained it, she felt herself seized with violence; and so great was her agitation, that it was not until she had been placed in a seat, that she recognized the marchese at her feet. As soon as she could speak, she exclaimed—"Release me instantly, sir!—What means this outrage?"

"Divine *signora!* pardon the terror I have caused you; be calm, let me entreat you."

"Leave the room instantly!" she cried, as she arose to seek the bell, which however, to her horror, she found had

been deprived of its cord, and inaccessible to her efforts.

"Hear me, lovely Julia—hear me but for a moment; my hopes and happiness depend upon this instant! I swear not to offer you violence or wrong, if you will but hear me!"

"Leave me free," she said, as the marchese clasped her in his arms to prevent her attaining the door, "or you shall deeply repent this violence."

"Hear me—you shall, by Heaven!" he exclaimed: "I have risked every consequence, and shall not tamely resign this opportunity; the hour is mine. At daylight I depart; but I could not leave you without once more seeing you, adorable signora! hear me then without emotion; calm, I supplicate you, this agitation, and I promise most sacredly that I shall not needlessly alarm you."

"Let me be free then," said Julia, who hoped, by obtaining a respite, to be able to escape the presence of the wretch.

At

At the same moment he released her from his embrace, but stood in such a position before the antique *fauteuil* in which she was placed, that again her hopes of avoiding him died away. His features were lighted up by passion, and as she stood before the lamp, their expression made her shudder; and the dark scowl that marked his brow, gave him the air of the most desperate of ruffians. Julia trembled violently as he regarded her some moments in silence, while his involuntary gestures indicated the uncontrolled passions by which he was actuated. At length he exclaimed — "Lady, I have set my life upon the cast, and desperation has driven me to this measure. From the moment I beheld you, your beauty occupied my every sense, and I loved with all the ardour that distinguishes those born under an Italian sun. I proposed, by the utmost devotion—by continued assiduity—by seizing every opportunity afforded me

during my residence beneath your roof, to evince my adoration—my respect—my love; but circumstances have abridged my stay, and I saw my hopes at once and for ever extinguished. Pardon then, divine signora, the step to which my desperation urged me. But time flies, and I must be brief. My heart—my name—my wealth—rank—and honour, I lay at your feet—all shall be yours; while my life shall be wholly, exclusively devoted to you; and in a happier climate, all that your desires can suggest, shall be freely offered, if you will deign to accept them. Consent then, adorable Julia, to make me happy. All is prepared for flight, and ere the morning sun arises, we shall be far from this. Fear not interruption, for measures have been taken to prevent any impediment to my purpose. Say, beautiful signora, that you will but consent, and in an instant——"

Julia, agitated and overcome, had yet sufficient strength to mark her abhor-

rence

rence of the Italian's proposal, and while scorn and indignation dwelt upon her countenance, she answered — "Never, monster! My life may be at this moment in your hands, but while I retain it, I shall resist your purpose.—Begone, and leave me at liberty."

"Then," he exclaimed, "my plan shall be executed;" and throwing off his cloak, she beheld that he wore a pair of pistols in his girdle; "resistance, signora, will be useless; the doors are all unbarred. My carriage waits, and you must accompany me. If you wish to avoid bloodshed, you will not vainly struggle."

A slight movement in another part of the room gave her, at the instant, to understand that her persecutor was not unattended; and almost fainting with terror, she fell back upon her seat, and clasped the arms of the chair as firmly as she was able, to resist the force that threatened her; but at the same instant a gleam

a gleam of joyful hope illuminated her face, while the alarm bell of the chateau rang without, loud and violently.—"Thank God!" she cried; "yet there is hope."

"Betrayed, by Heaven!" he exclaimed, as steps were heard quickly approaching; and seizing one of his pistols, he seemed determined to resist the entrance of those who had now reached the door.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.

Comus, Act I.

The Vintage.

THE antique oaken chair in which Julia had been placed was of singular size and construction, and affixed to the wall of the room; but it had not hitherto attracted her attention, otherwise than by its rich carving, and enormous proportions. When the threat of the marchese had induced her to clasp it, with the purpose of resisting the violence with which she was menaced, she had seized one of the massive knobs at the extremity of its arms, and in adhering to

to it with all her strength, had found it suddenly revolve, and at the instant the alarm bell was heard to sound. It was one of those secret communications which had been invented by the earlier proprietors, in times of jealousy, distrust, and danger, to summon their retainers; and it was in consequence of the shipwreck chamber not having been generally used for several centuries, that the secret remained unknown, and that this antique contrivance had escaped the more modern improvements which the rest of the chateau had undergone.

Its loud tone immediately called up all the inhabitants of the chateau, and they hastened to the apartment of their mistress.

"*Diavolo inferno!* I am lost," exclaimed the marchese, as the footsteps approached. "But I shall sell my life dear. Pietro! Pietro!"

The

The movement that had been heard, however, was not repeated; and the marchese stamped with fury, as he repeated his unanswered call to his domestic.

"The first who enters dies!" shouted he, in reply to the knocking without.

"Burst open the door!" exclaimed monsieur De Rougemont.

"It is too strong to be forced."

"Quick! seek for tools," Fritz was heard to cry; but at the moment a howl of rage was heard, and in the next the heavy portal yielded, with a tremendous crash, to the almost superhuman exertions of the Cretin.

"Stand off!" said the marchese to monsieur De Rougemont, who was the first that entered the room; "stand off, or you die! All I demand is, to be permitted to retire unharmed, which, if you refuse me, I fire!"

Monsieur

Monsieur De Rougemont, although unarmed, hesitated not to advance; when the Italian executed his threat, in discharging the pistol; but the ball grazed the head of the priest, without doing him injury. The smoke of the explosion, and general confusion that followed this attempted act of assassination, prevented, for a moment, monsieur De Rougemont from encountering his adversary; but a roar of angry rage announced that the Cretin had made him his prey; and he was seen writhing on the ground beneath his strong and muscular grasp.

" *Per l'amor de Dio!*" he frantickly exclaimed. " *Santa Maria! Santissima Virgini!* have mercy on me!"

His invocation was however arrested by the Cretin, who seemed determined to wreak his utmost vengeance on the Italian; while the enraged domestics were

but

but little disposed to protect him from Cavel's fury; and it is probable that his destruction would have been ensured, had it not been for monsieur De Rougemont's interference, who had, in the interim, been occupied with Julia, whom he was delighted to find had sustained no further injury than what her fears had created. With some difficulty he rescued the tortured Italian from the fate he justly merited; and it was with the greatest difficulty that the Cretin was induced to resign his hold; but if he rendered obedience to the repeated commands and efforts of the priest, his compliance had nothing graceful in it, as, in quitting his prey, he spurned the affrighted noble from him, with force so great, that he threw him against a large sofa, occupying the centre of the room, and which was overturned, with the marchese himself, by the violence of the shock. But here a new subject to gratify the vengeance of the Cretin presented itself,

itself, in the person of the dismayed valet, who, in his retreat, had hoped to escape notice.

His master had scarcely regained his feet, which he stamped with rage and shame, when he was doomed to still further disgrace; for Pietro, finding himself the object of Cavel's regard, in endeavouring to escape between the legs of his illustrious employer, brought him once more prostrate; and the object of their mutual fears, availing himself of the double advantage afforded him, assailed the worthy associates, until the united exertions of monsieur De Rougemont and the domestics alone availed in forcing him to desist.

The Cretin having been prevailed upon at length to withdraw, the discomfited noble, foaming with rage, and gnashing his teeth with uncontrolable despite, presented a figure, which, if indignation had

had not been predominant in the mind of the priest, would have excited his risibility. His hair, adjusted with the nicest art, no longer adorned his head, but, in the shape of a peruke, had left its exalted station, and lay at the feet of the ruin which it had once adorned; his face was swoln by the bruises administered by Cavel; his feet were unshod; and his tattered garments hung from his shoulders, divided into an infinity of morsels.

"Is this the return for the hospitality accorded you?" said monsieur De Rougemont; "for the attentions you have experienced beneath this roof?—to steal at midnight upon an unprotected female, daring to extend a cowardly hand towards her, and raising an assassin's weapon to an unarmed man!"

"Would to Heaven it had taken effect!" muttered the Italian.

"Silence!" said monsieur De Rougemont,

mont, "or I shall order you into a place of security, where you shall repent your villainy at leisure.

"*La Torture* is quite in order, your reverence," eagerly ejaculated Fritz; "we will remove his excellenza there in a moment. The water in it is not more than a foot deep; but should the illustrissimo fear catching cold, we will hang him upon one of the large hooks, quite out of the reach of the damp; or if he would prefer to sit on the cross beam, it is extremely dry and comfortable."

"Giesu Maria!" groaned out the valet.

"Or should monsieur," said Louis, another of the domestics, anxiously shoving himself forward, "prefer the state dungeon, I would set it to rights in a moment; there is a remarkably convenient stone bench to sleep on. But monsieur would be so obliging as not to tumble into the well, where the bodies of the criminals used to be thrown,

thrown, as it would be quite impossible to get him out again; and should he not break his neck, it would be extremely difficult to provide him his meals of bread and water, considering its depth."

"Santo Michele!" exclaimed Pietro.

"If his eccellenza would rather like a prospect," interrupted Fritz, "there is the strong room in the grenier on high; but the illustrissimo would have the goodness not to stamp with his feet as he is now doing, as the principal beam has not been repaired since the rain has rottened it, and might tumble upon the head of his eccellenza, which seems rather indifferently protected against such an accident."

"Padre mio!" screamed the domestic.

"He merits well the punishment you have devised," answered monsieur De Rougemont; "but I have reasons to forbear at present.—You are aware," he said, addressing the marchese, "of information which I possess; vengeance is

is in my power—vengeance full and complete! For once I shall withhold exerting it, but you shall instantly depart; and if your presence in this country be prolonged a day beyond what necessity requires, you shall incur it.—Begone!"

The command of the priest was quickly obeyed, as the marchese had suffered too much to desire to prolong a stay which could only teem with dishonour, mortification, and disgrace; and his sentiments were shared by the valet, whom an eventual imprisonment, or an actual renewal of warfare with the Cretin, had placed in such a state of terror, that ere "Begone!" was wholly thundered forth, he had already preceded his master. The servants of the chateau, actuated by anger as by mirth, also aided the egress of their guests, who, as soon as they were beyond the presence of monsieur De Rougemont, were again arrested,

arrested, until Fritz, with mock solemnity, had arranged the procession, at the head of which he figured, to conduct them forth. As it moved in order from the chateau, the Cretin, who discontentedly closed the rear, gave proof of his disappointment, in the objects of his fury thus escaping his hands, by an occasional growl, which sounded to the expelled like the minute roll of the muffled drum to the ears of a condemned soldier.

The marchese having departed, monsieur De Rougemont sought sister Mary, with whom he agreed, that, however despicable and cowardly had been the conduct of their visitor, his menaces should not be wholly disregarded; and without alarming Julia by the idea, to be upon the watch for her safety, at least for some time. Instructions were consequently given to the domestics to be upon their guard, should they at any

time remark circumstances of suspicion; and Louis was dispatched to the next post town, to observe the motions of the Italian; and was directed to remain there until he was assured of his having taken his departure, or until he had reason to fear the execution of some sinister design.

After an absence of two days, he returned, and stated that the marchese had actually departed for Italy, and that his recent discomfiture seemed sufficient to prevent his taking further measures to annoy the peace of the family. He was at the same time the bearer, from the post-office, of a letter from Mr. Everard, in which monsieur De Rougemont was informed that the object of his journey was in progress, and that he trusted ere long to return to his family, with intelligence highly interesting to the future happiness of his daughter and himself.

Assured

Assured of her father's safety, and restored to tranquillity, the time flew with rapid wings over Julia, who enjoyed the society of her beloved sister Mary, and the attentions of the worthy priest.

The autumn had now announced itself, by its effects on the foliage of the neighbouring forest; and with it had passed the period appointed for the return of major Beauclerc, on his way to England. No intelligence had been heard of him, and Julia began to fear that the recollection of the inhabitants of the chateau had been obliterated from his mind, and that any impression he had received was but of a transient nature. Anxiously as she endeavoured to imitate his presumed example, in striving to banish from her thoughts one in whose favour they had been warmly excited, she found the task more difficult than she had at first supposed. Her

strength of mind enabled her, however, to repel the violation of her bosom's peace, by the constant intrusion of his image on her fancy; but she would often unconsciously sigh, as she deemed the hopes that had once blossomed, withered and extinct. The observation of sister Mary had informed her, long since, of the secret of Julia's love; but she never demonstrated her knowledge, as too likely to give pain to one who possessed her entire affection.

As the season of the vintage arrived, she received letters from her father, which now bore the impress of doubt and sorrow. The object, whatever it was, that had summoned him so rapidly from his home, had not been attained, and he spoke of the moment of his return as deferred and yet distant. He seemed to be deeply affected by his own want of success; but a glimpse of hope, he informed her, still appeared to cheer him

him in his pursuit; and he had been indefatigable in removing the difficulties which yet opposed themselves to his restoration to his home.

Preparations were now made at the chateau for the commencement of the vintage on the estate of Mr. Everard. The vines were laden with the burdens of swelling grapes, and the period of their gathering was always one of interest to the inhabitants. Numbers of Savoyards, who had left their bleak and desert mountains, to share the profits accorded to those necessary to complete the harvest of the vine, daily arrived; and their cheerful and contented looks, their simple manners, and the mirth displayed by them amidst the severest poverty, their neat costume, and frugal habits, were calculated to interest and amuse. These poor but innocent mountaineers were accustomed at this season to flock in crowds to the chateau, as the

liberality of its proprietor had been long experienced; and happy were those esteemed, who, amongst these children of adversity and toil, were selected for employment; but even those who were rejected never left the spot dissatisfied, as Julia's bounty was prodigally bestowed; and at the conclusion of the general labour, vast numbers reassembled at the chateau, prior to their return to Savoy, where a rural but plenteous feast was always prepared for them, at which Julia presided; and, independent of copious refreshments, it was her custom to grant a trifling pecuniary boon to each, sufficient to prevent these indigent peasants from having recourse to the humble profits they had hardly earned, for the expences of their journey home. This feast, which had existed for several years, had become so popular, that the neighbouring Swiss families were accustomed to solicit permission to partake of it; and even visitors from the more distant towns

towns would uninvited arrive, and put Mr. Everard's hospitality to the test. Their reception was such as not likely to diminish their numbers on a future occasion; and each successive season brought additional recruits, to demand their enrollment as partakers of the general mirth.

Amongst these peasants, one troop was always regarded by themselves with peculiar honour, and by their hosts with the warmest interest, as although they differed from the faith of the Savoyards in general, they bore and were allowed by their compatriots the distinctive appellation of ancient Christians. Their local name is that of Vaudés, and they inhabit the neighbouring vallies of Piedmont, where the rites of their communion, and their profession of faith, are wholly conformable to those of the Protestant churches, although they have never been yet subjected to reform. So

early as the eighth century, they practised in their retreats the simple observances of their communion; and it was their bishop, Claudius, who, in the succeeding century, boldly protested against the abuses then introduced in the Catholic church. Their numbers were at one time immense, and existed in all the towns of Italy, and had extended themselves to the remotest districts of Calabria, until persecution destroyed almost every memorial of them in each country, except in the obscure vallies where they still exist. Their manners and customs accord with the purity of their doctrines, and they have long commanded the esteem and respect of those of an opposite creed, who could not deny their virtuous habits, and their high antiquity.

The national fete celebrated by the natives of the Pays de Vaud in the town of Vevay, once in four years, as soon as the vintage has been concluded, and which

which has often attracted spectators even from the shores of England, is too well known to require description. That celebrated on the estate of Mr. Everard, became in the course of time an epitome of the former; and the vignerons, or labourers at the vine, succeeded in ingrafting on their festival, an imitation of the splendid procession, and of the heterogeneous characters represented in that town, where are to be seen figuring on the occasion, characters taken equally from ancient scripture, and from the profane mythology of Greece. The principal personage is, appropriately, Bacchus, not shewn

"As youthful poets fancy when they love,"

but such as the strange figure of the Cretin could represent. Seated on a tun, and borne on the shoulders of his companions, he was conspicuous in the centre of the crowd, his matted and shaggy hair entwined with vine leaves, and bear-

ing in either hand his wand and cup; while the extraordinary expression of his projecting eyeballs, glaring with joy at his temporary glory, if it did not give to his features the grace, invested them at least with all the wild inspiration of the god of grape, and his extravagant and ecstatic gesture called forth shouts of joy and peals of laughter from all around them. Near him was seen the old Silenus, whose limited classical attainments had led him to err in the choice of his costume; and Fritz, whose knowledge of antiquity went no higher than his own times, had rendered more the Major Sturgeon of Foote, than the foster-father of the Indian god. As a matter of taste, he had added to the adornments a huge peruke, surmounted by a helmet of imposing majesty. A variety of other characters were assumed by the peasantry, and to the sound of music and the joyous shouts of their associates, they entered in solemn procession

sion the avenue leading to the castle, at the close of day, on their return from their last labour among the vines.

On the terrace, in front of the chateau, was seen the table destined for the accommodation of the principal persons who honoured its proprietor with their company; while beneath, three rows of tables were spread to a considerable extent, intended to regale the peasantry. These were laden with rural luxuries and solid fare, suited to the taste of the simple and unrefined, whose attachment to their national and plain repast had been consulted on the occasion. The Swiss sausage was seen to crown mountains of white compote or sourcrout, like the dark apex of Etna surmounting its subjacent snows; while joints of meat, whose capacity accorded with the appetite of the company, were liberally spread. The first pressed and luscious juice of the grape yet unfermented, with plenty of

older wines, and the liquor made from the cherry, denominated kischen-wasser, were freely distributed, until unreserved jollity reigned amongst the happy guests. The whole was brilliantly illuminated by variegated lamps, extending their lines from tree to tree, which gave to those assembled at the table placed on the terrace above, a distinct and brilliant view of this animated and interesting scene.

When the company had been fully satisfied, and the repast terminated, one of the most ancient of the Vaudés, who had for half a century regulated the labours of the vine, reminded his fellow-workmen of the custom of expressing their gratitude for the bounties they had received, in ancient form; when an air, which has been long popular in the country, was immediately sung by the united groups.

The

The noise and uproar which had prevailed, suddenly ceased at the command of the elder, as they stood in an attitude of respect, prepared to commence the grateful expression of their joy; bands of Tyrolese musicians, in their green costume, commenced the prelude, when, at a given signal, the assembled multitude chanted the simple act of grace, which the traveller may often hear sung at the cottage-door, when the peasant, seated on his rural bench, reposes on his return from the labour of the day.

"O Dieu, dont les bienfaits
Ne se lassent jamais—
O Dieu de Pâix!
Pour louer tes presens,
S'unissent tes enfans—
Ecoute leur accens
Reconnaissans!

Tu gardes nos berceaux;
Tu donnes le repos
A nos hameaux:

Tu

Tu benis nos travaux,
Tu nourris nos troupeaux,
Tu couvres nos couteaux
De fruits si beaux.

Pour combler tes faveurs,
O Dieu! rends nous meilleurs—
Garde nos cœurs!
Nous voulons te servir,
Nous voulons te benir,
Et mettre à t'obeir
Notre plaiser.

The effect of this simple and pathetic song, sung to our national air (said, with what degree of truth is not known, to have been adopted there prior to its introduction into England), with reverence and feeling, was sublime and beautiful. As soon as it was ended, the veteran expressed in words, which, according to the phrase of a late celebrated orator, poet, and dramatist, "came red hot from the heart," the thanks of his associates towards Julia, for her generosity; concluding

concluding by commanding a libation to the health of " the lady of the chateau," which was received by loud, prolonged, and sincere acclamations of applause. This done, airs of Germany, France, Savoy, and Switzerland, were sung; until preparations for dancing commenced, and the tables were removed to give space for sports upon " the light fantastic toe."

While monsieur De Rougemont regarded with pleasure the agreeable sight which the avenue beneath presented, in the assemblage of happy and contented beings, whose active industry was thus agreeably terminated and rewarded, he observed at the lower extremity of one of the tables, several men, in the dress of Savoyards, whose manners attracted his attention, as they did not appear to participate in the general mirth; or when obliged to conform to the gay and festive humour of the company, did it with

with evident constraint, and in opposition to the free dispositions of the other guests. He also thought, that their regards were at times fixed with mysterious meaning towards the table at which he sat, and when aware of having attracted attention, that they withdrew their eyes in confusion, and seemed frequently employed in whispering to each other, while their looks were again significantly directed towards the chateau.

One of them particularly excited his observation—it was a man of high and lofty stature, and athletic form, whose dark and sullen scowl, bronzed features, and large black mustachios, gave him a savage air, and the appearance of a bandit.

Although little pleased with the manners of these visitors, he was anxious not to disturb the harmony of the meeting;

ing; but inwardly determined, as soon as the tables were cleared, to examine them more closely. Aware also that many of those who wrought in the vineyards had just returned to their native country, after having long served beneath the imperial eagle, bearing with them the marks of a profession, which, as it was exercised, tended rather to excite than repress the harsher feelings of our nature, he dismissed the momentary sensation of uneasiness which he had experienced; and after some time, the circumstance scarcely existed in his remembrance.

As soon as the preparations for the rustic ball commenced, Julia retired to give instructions for that which generally had place in the chateau, amongst the higher class of visitors; and monsieur De Rougemont descended to converse with the rural bands beneath, by whom he was equally beloved and respected.

spected. As soon as he arrived amongst them, he was surrounded by throngs, anxious to greet him; and he was long occupied in answering the felicitations he affectionately received from every side.

The call to dance at length relieved him from their salutations, and he sought for a long time among the crowd the figures which had formerly attracted his attention, but without success; and he felt rather gratified at their absence, although still anxious, if possible, to ascertain their characters. For this purpose he addressed himself to a young man with whom he was acquainted, and who had been seated near them.—"Do you know, Francois, who were the men seated near you at the foot of the table?"

"They were not of this country, monsieur, nor of the company of vignerons. I never saw them before, and would not be

be sorry should I never see them again."

"For what reason?"

"Why, I think they were no better than they should be, monsieur; and they looked more like murderers than Christians; and one of them was certainly disguised—he who had a large patch covering his left eye, and a brown wig upon his head. I heard one of his companions whisper to him, when he thought he was not overheard, that there was no fear of his being found out, for the devil himself wouldn't know him again. They little thought I heard them; but I have ears like my grandame, monsieur, who, once upon a time —'twas twelve good years come Martinmas, and she was then more than seventy-two—but stop—don't let me tell a lie; she was just beginning her seventy-second year, because she said to me the same day—'Francois,' said she ——"

"You must tell me this story another time,

time, Francois," said the priest, who knew by experience, that the episodes of Francois were ten times more lengthened than the tale itself. "But did you hear their names?"

"I can't say as I did, monsieur, as they spoke an outlandish lingo; although I remember when the big black fellow, with the mustachios, told the other that he need not fear being found out, he said, said he—'But mind what you are about, Pietro."

"Pietro!"

"Pietro, monsieur; I am sure of the words; for my ears, like grandame's, are as quick at catching a sound, and she was known every where for it; for once upon a time——"

At this moment monsieur de Rougemont observed the Cretin in his fantastic garb, eagerly and anxiously seeking some one in the crowd; and as soon as he gained sight of the priest, he ran towards him, indicating by violent gestures,

tures, and extravagant signs, that he had something of importance to communicate. His manner was so agitated and disturbed, that accustomed as monsieur de Rougemont had been to interpret his actions, he could gain no insight into the intelligence the Cretin wished to convey, and he strove vainly to construe his movements, until the cry of Fritz was heard from the chateau, exclaiming —" Mademoiselle is not to be found."

Monsieur de Rougemont rushed towards the chateau, accompanied by the crowd of peasants, whose noisy mirth was suddenly changed to the silence of dread; and as he reached the gate, he was met by sister Mary, who evidently sought him, and whom he was now obliged to support from falling to the ground, overcome by the violence of her feelings.—" In God's name, what means this? Speak instantly!" cried monsieur de Rougemont to Fritz, who had just arrived.

"My young lady has disappeared, sir," answered the old man; "search has been made throughout the chateau, but we have sought her in vain."

At this moment Louis, out of breath, hastily approached the spot.—"Heaven be merciful!" he exclaimed; "my young lady!—my poor young lady!"

"What has befallen her?" demanded the priest.

"I heard a shriek, your honour, in the direction of the wood, and ran thither, but no trace of my mistress could be discovered; although I once imagined I heard horse-steps at a distance, on the sward, and returned to mount for the pursuit."

"To horse, without delay!" shouted monsieur de Rougemont, as he consigned the inanimate form of sister Mary to her attendants.

A hollow and indignant murmur rose around, as the assembled peasantry heard the

the relation of the domestic, which was succeeded by cries of rage and sorrow at the outrage perpetrated upon one who was universally beloved and respected. While the servants hastened to the stables, the guests seized the various lamps destined for happier purposes, to guide them in their search, through the wood in the rear of the chateau; and in a short time the various groups were distributed in every direction, seeking, by the aid of flambeaux and other lights, in its recesses, some trace of their benefactress. The horsemen departed on the gallop, by different routes, but without any clue to guide them, to discover, if possible, the path pursued by the ruffians who had seized their mistress, for to no other cause than that of violence could be now attributed the sudden disappearance of Julia.

In the utmost agony of mind at the loss of her whom he had long cherished and

and protected, monsieur De Rougemont endeavoured to preserve his presence of mind, and determined to remain where he would be of more service than by joining in the pursuit, which so many had already adopted. As he paced with hurried steps the terrace, and revolved in his mind the probable causes of Julia's disappearance, the agitation of the Cretin, at the moment of Fritz's announcement of her loss, returned to his remembrance; and he directed that Cavel should be immediately sought, as his presence might tend to elucidate the mystery. In vain, however, was every inquiry made respecting him; and it became clear that his ardent zeal for his young mistress had also induced him to depart in quest of her. Finding himself at length alone, as the anxiety of the company and household permitted none to remain neuter on the occasion, he proceeded to ascertain the state of sister Mary, and his grief was augment-

ed

ed in learning that she had been attacked by repeated convulsions, which had so debilitated her, that she had become insensible, and every effort to restore her had been ineffectual. On descending to the hall, he met several peasants, who had returned from a fruitless search; and as the night advanced, others occasionally appeared, whose exertions had been equally vain. As day broke, the horsemen arrived from time to time, but every endeavour on their parts had been wholly unsuccessful.

That Julia had fallen a prey to the intrigues and artifices of the unprincipled Italian, who had been sheltered beneath her roof, was the only explanation of her disappearance which offered itself to the mind of monsieur de Rougemont, and that the persons who had attracted his attention during supper, were the agents of the marchese in this outrage, seemed likely, as their absence

coincided with the moment at which she had disappeared; and the circumstance of one among them bearing the appellation of Pietro, strongly confirmed the idea. Under this impression, messengers were instantly dispatched on the route to Italy, with orders particularly to take their station on different points of the passage of the Simplon, where they might be enabled to observe those who passed, and possibly arrest the flight of the marchese, should he be the author of the crime, and intend to bear his prize to his possessions in that country. Information was also given to the local authorities of the different towns; and every effort which prudence could suggest, was used to intercept, if possible, the flight of those who had possessed themselves of the person of Julia.

Although the various emissaries whom monsieur de Rougemont had expedited had

had returned to the chateau, the succeeding day elapsed without the appearance of the Cretin. That he had fallen a victim to his zeal for her, or that he had been more fortunate than others in his endeavours, was the conclusion of the priest; and to the latter idea he fondly attached himself, and cherished the hope that each moment would afford him some intelligence of one who had been confided to his care, and who shared his affection: but to every new attempt the same result was attached, and not the slightest clue could be afforded to an event which had brought grief and consternation upon the inhabitants of the chateau. Each successive day commenced with renewed hopes, and terminated with fresh disappointment; and those walls which but recently resounded to the expressions of mirth and joy, and had long ensured content and tranquillity, became the abode of sorrow. The presence of

her who had animated its tenants was wanting; the uncertainty and probable horror of her fate, were continually present to their minds; each conjecture was the source of misery; each surmise but augmented their affliction; until a general gloom pervaded the countenances of its inhabitants, and discontent and grief usurped the place of happiness and ease.

To sister Mary the blow threatened to prove fatal, as every art was vainly enforced to cheer her spirits, or dissipate, in some degree, the despair with which she became possessed.

Monsieur de Rougemont felt and bore the painful visitation, with the spirit of a man, and of a Christian; but although he complained not, it was too evident that his heart was deeply affected; and while he endeavoured to afford comfort to his companion, and to inspire

inspire her with hope, it was easy to be seen that his thoughts were at variance with his words.

CHAPTER VIII.

The conduct of these watchful mutes is strange;
They seize me, guard me, and confine me here;
Yet answer nothing.

Alzira, Act V. Scene 1.

The Journey.

It is now time to account for the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Julia from the chateau, and to recount the causes which filled its inhabitants with terror and dismay. As soon as the order had been given to terminate the banquet, and commence preparations for the rustic ball, Julia retired, unperceived by the rest of the company, to give directions for the entertainment which, at the conclusion of the peasants'

sants' fete, was usually given in the interior of the chateau to the superior order of visitors; and to examine if a proper disposition had been made for the distribution of that bounty, which was annually bestowed by her hands to the humble Savoyards previous to their departure.

On entering the hall, she found it wholly deserted, as the domestics were all busily engaged in removing the tables without, and clearing a space for the dance; and she was on the point of returning to her friends, when the sound of voices, at the opposite extremity, convinced her that she would meet with some person in the servants' room. Advancing hastily, she called for an attendant; but as the sounds had ceased, she proceeded forward, in hopes of encountering Fritz, who she imagined was there occupied.

Leaving the hall, she found the passage completely dark, but acquainted with every part of the chateau, she pursued her way to the butlery in the rear of the building, on reaching which, she found it locked; but at the same moment a footstep was heard advancing, and in the next she was forcibly seized, and ere she could recover from her surprise, she felt herself enveloped in a cloak, that wholly covered her face and form, and almost prevented her the power of respiration. In this state she was raised by her assailant, and in his arms carried forward with the greatest speed, as well as she could perceive, in the direction of the wood immediately behind the chateau. The horror with which she was filled prevented her for some time resisting the force by which she was confined; but at length, the violence of her struggle partially removed the cloak, and seeing that the ruffian who bore her was on the point of

of entering the wood, she shrieked loudly; but her face was again muffled, and every attempt to free herself from his hold was ineffectual.

After entering the wood, the villain paused for a moment, as if to ascertain if alarm had been given, and sounding a shrill whistle, was immediately answered, by persons at a short distance from the spot, upon which she was again hurried forward, until the man stopped, and she felt herself lifted upon a horse, which he at the same instant mounted, and instantly galloped off with his burthen. The green sward that covered the alleys of the wood prevented the paces of the animal being heard; and although he frequently slipped, on the humid and dank grass, the skill of his rider prevented him repeatedly from falling. On emerging from the wood, he arrested his progress for a moment, to place the almost senseless

Julia in a position less painful than she had till then been in; and having commanded, with an oath, that she should not speak—an injunction her terror did not permit her to violate—he proceeded forward, with the same rapidity, and as it seemed, by by-paths in the direction of the Jura.

After continuing for several hours, with a degree of speed that evinced the strength of the animal which bore them, it suddenly slackened its pace, and by its movement, Julia perceived that they had begun to ascend the mountain. As if confident of being beyond the reach of pursuit, the man unloosed the cowl of the mantle, that had hitherto shrouded her head, so as to afford her air; and the cold and refreshing breeze of night soon recalled her to that animation, which, although not wholly suspended, had been arrested by the weight and heat of the envelope.

Recovering

Recovering her senses, the first sound that attracted her attention, was that of a clock in the plain below, announcing the hour of midnight. As she listened to its distant toll, the thoughts of her beloved friends and paternal roof came forcibly to her mind, which had been until then too much overpowered by fear to indulge in the retrospection; and a violent flood of tears burst from her eyes, and long and continued sobs testified the anguish of her heart. Her conductor seemed touched, in some degree, by her grief, as he appeared anxious to place her in a situation upon the animal the least incommodious; and encouraged by this slight and equivocal testimony of sympathy, she was emboldened feebly and timidly to demand why she was thus subjected to violence, and to supplicate him to desist from the continuance of his course.

"By all the saints, mademoiselle, I

know as little of the matter as yourself: I am paid for my work, and must finish it. But be not alarmed; no harm shall come to you," he answered, gruffly.

"Have pity on me, and return me to my friends, and you shall be amply rewarded: let me beseech you to have compassion on me."

"Reward! ay, ay, a noose and slip-knot, lady. We of the noble order of contrabandists are not very particular about wearing its collar, although many a monarch may be willing to invest us. But hark!"

The man halted, and listened for some time, as if hoping to catch some sound from the plain below.—"What can they be doing?" he muttered to himself, apparently disappointed. "But it's always thus. By St. Dominick, if they be taken, we shall have made a pretty job of it!"

He continued his route at a gentle pace, as if now fearless of pursuit, or obliged

obliged to proceed slowly from the rugged and difficult nature of the road, which was one of the innumerable cattle tracks with which the Jura abounds, and which are only used at a particular season of the year, in conducting the cows from the plains to the mountains, where, in small cots, or sheds, denominated chalets, the cheese, so celebrated throughout Europe, is prepared, and the spot is afterwards wholly abandoned, until the return of the period of greatest heat. So intricate are their windings, that it is with difficulty the cowherds attain their destinations on such occasions; and they are often obliged to spend successive nights in the woods, ere they discover the spot they seek. The smugglers that transport the prohibited merchandize of France and Switzerland alternately into either country, are, however, generally acquainted with these tracts, and easily trace their way; and Julia was, from this circumstance,

and

and the man's observation, convinced that she had fallen into the hands of one of those outlaws; but what his motive or design could be, she could not imagine.

"For the blessed Virgin's sake," she again exclaimed, "release me here! Let me but return to my home, and you shall be largely recompensed. Fear not," she added, as he shook his head at her proposal; "fear not, the past shall be forgotten; restore me to my family, and you shall be screened from any consequences you may dread."

"The past forgotten!" he muttered, sullenly and ironically; "ay, when the chopper relieves my shoulders from the weight of my head. I don't think, as you say, the past will then much trouble my thoughts. But my noble master, ma'amselle, has wherewith to hang or guillotine all our band—that is, while he is strongest; were that not the case, we

we wouldn't be slow in doing him the same favour."

"Who is your employer?"

"That you will know in time, lady; at present, be content that your and my fate are in his hands; and what he orders I must through with, were it murder!" He paused for a length of time; and Julia shuddered while her conductor, in tones scarcely articulate, but in a hurried voice, continued—"The souls in purgatory would howl at my approach! No matter—it is now too late; all the saints in company cannot save me!—Curse him!" He stopped, and began whistling, with a degree of energy that proved his anxiety to rid himself of bitter recollections, and the remorse by which he was tortured.

Trembling and affrighted, Julia gained courage, in the idea that her companion was accessible even to such feelings.—"By your hope of mercy, spare me!" she exclaimed. "That one act of pity

pity will plead your pardon for a thousand sins! For the sake of our lady of sorrow, save me!"

"Silence!" loudly cried the man, as if fearful that his better feelings might be awakened. "Silence! or you shall repent it!"

Julia obeyed his command; nor was the conversation renewed for several hours, during which they slowly climbed the mountain, her conductor pausing at intervals of the ascent to ascertain if his companions approached. They at length reached a chalet, or dairy-house, closely embowered amidst the enormous pines of the Jura, when the man alighted, and assisted Julia to descend.

The cot at which they had arrived was, as is always the case at that season, wholly deserted; and Julia was aware that it was hopeless to expect the encounter of any other human being in that

that desert spot, than those into whose power she had fallen.

The man, after he had helped her to descend, entered the cot, and motioned her to be seated on the only chair it possessed. He then returned to the door, and listened attentively for a length of time; after which he paced before it in silence, until the dawn appeared.

From the spot that Julia occupied, she could regard far around; but the plain below was wholly shrouded by a thick mist, which prevented her from descrying the chateau. As the beams of morning gradually developed the distant scene, she wept bitterly for her friends and for herself. Torn from the arms of affection, a few hours had hurled her from happiness to misery; and death itself became desirable, as she looked forwards towards her probable fate. The motive for the outrage thus inflict-

ed by lawless ruffians, she was wholly at a loss to imagine; and her heart was in some degree lightened, as she indulged the idea, that she had been seized merely for the purpose of ransom, and that, although with considerable sacrifices, her liberty might be regained.

Her meditations were at length interrupted, by her conductor sounding his whistle, which was answered from below; and ere long the sound of horses' feet were distinctly heard approaching; and after some time, three men were observed, leading their animals, who seemed equally fatigued with their conductors. As they approached, they were saluted by her companion with a tremendous oath. — "What has kept you so long?" he demanded. "This is not the first time I have been so served; but, by St. Jacques, it shall be the last, if I swing for it! and rely upon it, I shall not do so alone!"

"Stop

"Stop that tongue of yours," retorted one of his companions, "without you choose to use it to bless your luck: we were within a hair's breadth of being trapped; and it was only by a circuit of many a mile, and the strength of our animals, we escaped. Poor beasts, they are completely knocked up."

"Luck!" repeated the first; "I will sing jubilate when we are safe, for we shan't be able to move until they have had rest and provender; see to it, Marco: but where is Pietro?"

Julia started at the name; and the idea of the marchese being the instigator of the act flashed across her mind.

"He is here," replied Marco; "the lazy poltroon does us more harm than good; I wish we were well rid of him."

"Hush!" observed Julia's companion; "he will hear us. Did you meet any person on the mountain?"

"No;

"No; but it is well we were together, for we were tracked by a bear, that kept near us for some time, and until we left the thicket just below. I would have shot him, but the darkness prevented my ever getting a good aim.—Pietro here swore it was a man, and that we were watched; but he is not used to the gentry who keep court here."

"May be," answered a voice, which Julia recollected instantly to be that of the marchese's valet: "but I am not so sure yet that it was not a spy. But where is the signora?"

"She is safe lodged within," answered her companion, as he led the way to the chalet, which he entered, followed by Pietro.

"*Servo umilissimo, signora mia,*" impudently observed the latter, in making her an affected bow; "you see we are men of honour, and keep our word. As you did not allow his eccellenza time to thank you for the many favours we

received

received at the chateau, we have taken the liberty of doing it in this manner."

"Is the marchese here?" faltered Julia.

"Don't fear, *signora divinissima;* you shall soon see his *eccellenza* at the feet of your angelic person."

"For God's sake," exclaimed she, in casting herself upon her knees before the valet, "save me from his power! Oh, lead me from this place, and any terms you may place your service at, shall be readily acceded to."

"That is our intention, *signorina;* the marchese is too polite to leave you in this horrid place; he would rather you should grace a palace, where every luxury shall be at your command; we shall soon set forward for Italy."

"If you are deaf to entreaty," said Julia, rising, "at least, ere it be too late, dread the vengeance that awaits you. If death be my doom, I can bear it; but be assured, that ere long justice will

will overtake you, and that you will meet the punishment you merit." Overcome by her feelings, she fell back on the seat, and sobbed loud and violently.

"Come, come," said her conductor, addressing himself to Pietro angrily, "no more of this; the job is done—that ought to satisfy you; and you need not add insult to injury. Give us the provisions, for we are half famished."

Pietro descended the besace, or sack, from his horse, and the troop employed themselves in spreading their provisions on the grass; and when done, her conductor approached with some cold fowl and bread, and a glass of wine.—"You had better eat a morsel, mademoiselle," he said, in presenting her refreshments; "the morning is cold and raw, and you have need of it. There is a glass of Courtailleux, that will do you no harm. Let me prevail upon you, lady."

Julia could not refrain from thanking him, while she accepted his offer.

With manners more rude, and probably a character more daring and guilty than his companions, yet he seemed at times more open to that compassion of which his associates were evidently incapable.

After the repast was finished, her conductor went to examine the state of the horses, and soon returned in, stating that they would not be able to move for some hours. The men then prepared to repose for some time on the grass, depositing their pistols near them, and Julia was left to her melancholy reflections.

Half an hour had thus passed, and her guards appeared overcome with sleep, while Julia, with her head resting on her arm, was absorbed in thought of the

the dear friends from whom she was separated, when a slight rustling of the leaves near the chalet aroused her attention, and going gently to the window, she at length discerned the poor Cretin placed behind a tree, and anxiously reconnoitring her enemies, as if calculating the surest mode of attack, with the greatest probable chance of success. He was still arrayed in the garb he wore the preceding evening, and held the sword in his hand which had served as an ornament to him on occasion of the fete; and it was clear that he had closely tracked the path of the ruffians, who had mistaken his movements in the brushwood for those of one of the ferocious inhabitants of the Jura. As she bent forward, Cavel recognized her, with that warmth of feeling, the expression of which nature had denied him the faculty of restraining, and at the same instant rushed impetuously from his place of concealment; but the noise he made awoke

awoke the ruffians, and aroused by the alarm, they were upon their feet before he reached them. One of them had already fallen beneath his blow, when his eyes encountered the figure of Pietro, whom he recognized with a cry of rage and fury; and as he prepared to spring upon his prey, the valet fled into the chalet, with dismay and horror, at the sight of his ancient foe: but ere the Cretin entered, he had drawn forth a pistol, which he discharged at the moment, and Cavel, staggering forward, fell at the feet of Julia, and with a look which expressed more of solicitude for his lady than for his own pangs, he expired without a groan.

Julia, horror-struck, beheld with agony the lifeless body of the faithful creature, who had sacrificed existence in her defence. Her tears flowed plentifully, as she became assured that the vital spark was extinct; but indignation at

length fortified her with a degree of energy, which she had not before experienced.—"Heaven's direst judgment rest upon your head, base murderer!" she exclaimed to Pietro, as her conductor entered. "Let this foul deed be added to your outrage on myself; and tremble, villain, at the certain fate awaiting you, and the fearful doom to which Almighty Justice has devoted you!"

The trembling ruffian, with the smoking weapon in his guilty hand, remained with his haggard eyes fixed upon the corpse, and as Julia concluded her words, his agitation became excessive.

Her conductor, who had sought the cause of the confusion he had heard, on viewing the body of a murdered man, turned a fierce and savage look upon the assassin, and seemed disposed almost to avenge the death of the unfortunate Cretin.—"Blood! again blood!" he muttered:

"is

" is all hell leagued against me, that my way must ever be marked by murder? I thought the tale of my damnation was complete ere this—but, no! Why did you this?" he demanded furiously of the valet; but not affording him leisure to reply, continued—" Breathe not—speak not, cursed tempter, who have seduced my soul to sin! but 'tis past!" he exclaimed, in striking his forehead violently with his clenched hand; " there's no retreat—no hope—and now, no fear. Had I not known you and your employer, this would not have been. Our work must be completed. Prepare to depart."

His other associates, who seemed unused to scenes of blood, silently prepared to obey; when Julia, in whose breast hope had in some degree revived from the expressions of her conductor, made another effort to excite his pity.—" Hear me!" she said, seizing his arm; " in mercy, hear me! If that wretch's hand

has added to your crimes, there's yet redemption in not pursuing farther this dark plot. Pause while you can—think of my misery—of a father's sorrow, and do not rush beyond the reach of hope or pardon, while yet an act of pity may repair a mass of ill. Fear not your companions," she continued, as with a doubtful glance he looked around him; "they are not villains by profession, and will consent you do me justice. The wretch you serve cannot prevail against you, if you restore me to my friends."

"I fear him not, lady," said the man, hesitatingly; but after a pause he shook her violently off—"It cannot be—I am fettered to his will: no more words. Let us be gone."

Julia saw her hopes at once destroyed; and she resumed her seat, the image of despair, while the men were employed in arranging for their departure. The necessity of interring the Cretin occupied

pied them a considerable time; and the mournful office was performed in silence, the dark features of her guide assuming an expression of savage gloom, as he assisted at the task; while his associates seemed affected, with the exception of Pietro, who strove to justify the deed, but to whose words no one seemed disposed to pay attention.

The man who had encountered the first effects of the Cretin's fury, still lay extended on the ground, groaning from time to time, and it was found that he had suffered so severely, that it would be necessary to place him before one of his companions on horseback, as he was unable to keep his seat, and her conductor sullenly complained of the danger which in consequence would attend the delay of their expedition. There was however no remedy; and as soon as the beasts were saddled, and the wounded man accommodated, her conductor en-

tered to lead her forth.—"We must be gone, mademoiselle; the day is far advanced, and we have a long ride yet. I wish the business were well over."

Julia followed him, and was placed upon a pillion behind him, and they proceeded on their journey in silence. They pursued their way along the ridge of the Jura, by obscure and unfrequented paths, proceeding in a westerly direction, until at noon Julia recognized the Dole, the highest of the chain of hills, and which arose above the chateau of her father. Her grief was increased in ascertaining that, though distant from it, she was in a line with the abode of her beloved friends, who now mourned her loss; and her eyes dwelt upon the object which she had so often viewed under happier circumstances, until emerging deep in the forest, it was wholly shut out from her sight. They proceeded slowly beneath the branches of the

the dark and lofty pines, without encountering a human being, until the sun had set, when the distant tone of a convent bell, announcing the "Ave Maria," induced Julia to believe that they were in the Pays de Gex, within the frontiers of France. As she listened to the slow and melancholy chime, she repeated the "Angelus" with devotion; and even her associates kept their heads uncovered, as they pronounced the salutation of the divine herald to the Virgin. Hoping that her guide might halt at some convent, she looked eagerly forwards, in expectation momentarily of viewing its walls; but they stopped at a lone and drear cottage, which was the first habitation they had yet encountered.

On entering the rude and humble dwelling, they were received by a woman whose appearance and manners conformed with those of the men in whose power she had fallen. She was tall,

tall, and masculine of form; her hardened features were marked, apparently, by premature age, and the care attendant upon a lawless life; her matted hair was unconfined, and her voice yielded not in asperity to her appearance.

"Have you got us something ready, Ursule?" demanded the conductor of Julia, "for we are all nearly famished, and mademoiselle has scarcely touched any thing the live-long day. Be quick, for we have no time to lose."

"I warrant ye not," growled the female, sulkily: "here have I been upon the watch these five hours for you. I tell you, have a care, or ye will repent it; and had it not been that I cared not to betray my trust, I was near decamping, and leaving you to do as you could."

"Why what has happened to frighten the hag? Give us our soup, and quit your croaking. The day has been bad enough

enough as it is; for your friend Marco, without there, has been unlucky, and perhaps won't be easily cured of the injury he has received; and how we shall get on with him, I know not, and it wouldn't be safe to leave him here."

"Marco? ill-betide him! had he followed my advice, he would not have meddled with the job—I told him what would come of it: but well or ill, dead or alive, you must bear him with you." Here she whispered something in the man's ear, that Julia could not understand.

"What!" he exclaimed, "the gens d'armes about! By Holy Cross, there is no time to be lost! although the beasts are knocked up, and will scarcely reach the shore. But it is no use reasoning about it: I must see that they have had their food; and do you, Ursule, carry something to Marco, who is groaning there upon the straw without. Come, beldame, move!"

During

During this conversation, Julia had partaken of the meagre fare set before her; and slight as was the refreshment, she felt revived by it. Ursule and her conductor had left the room, while the companions of the latter had taken their meal outside of the cottage, and she felt relieved in being for a moment alone. In vain she endeavoured to fathom the direction they intended to pursue. She was now on the French territory, where it projects into the Pays de Vaud, as far as the Lake of Geneva; and she could only imagine that it was their design to cross it, and reach Savoy—an idea in which she was shortly afterwards fully confirmed, on the return of the female and her conductor, when the latter addressed her.—"I am sorry, lady, not to give you time for a short repose, which I am certain you require; but we have been so long delayed, that we have no time to spare, and must reach the shores of

of the Lake to-night; but the painful part of your journey will be soon over. The horses are saddled, and all ready."

END OF VOL. II.

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CHATEAU OF LEASPACH.

A TALE.

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CHATEAU OF LEASPACH;

OR, THE

STRANGER IN SWITZERLAND.

A Tale.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

——————— Of all
Our passions, I wonder Nature made
The worst, foul Jealousy, her favourite:
And if it be not so, why took she care
That every thing should give the monster nourishment,
And left us nothing to destroy it with. SUCKLING.

VOL. III.

London:
PRINTED FOR A. K. NEWMAN AND CO.
1827.

CHATEAU OF LEASPACH.

CHAPTER I.

It is now dead midnight;
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh!
Richard III. Act V. Scene 3.

The Castle.

MECHANICALLY, and in silence, Julia followed her guide, who placed her on horseback, while the female mounted behind Pietro, who had not dared to approach Julia since the fatal event of the morning; and still adhering to unfrequented tracks, they turned to the left on leaving the cottage, and gradually descending,

scending, had soon quitted the Pays de Gex, and pursued their route in the direction of Versaix, situated on the borders of the Leman, then belonging to France. Towards midnight they approached the town, but did not enter it, as they continued to proceed in the direction of Geneva, until they arrived at the spot where the road branches off towards Fernex, on the banks of the lake, where they halted. Her conductor having left them for a short time, returned in, saying that all was ready for their embarkation; and Julia was obliged to dismount. One of the men received orders to conduct the horses to Geneva, after he should have disposed of their accoutrements by throwing them into the lake; and the party descended to the shore, where a bark was ready to receive them, and in which they were placed with the unfortunate Marco, whose state evidently became worse as they proceeded.

The

The night was calm and beautiful; a slight and too favourable breeze scarcely disturbed the surface of the lake, while the moon pursued her unclouded way above them. At any other moment, the tranquil beauty of the scene would have agreeably impressed Julia, but the terror under which she laboured, and the extraordinary fatigue she had undergone, so completely overpowered her, that she could no longer resist the inclination to repose. A coarse and common mattress was placed upon the deck; and upon Ursule's recommending her to rest, and engaging to remain by her (for her youth, beauty, and innocence, had even affected her rude companion), she threw herself upon her humble bed, and soon sank into a profound sleep, protected from the night air by the large and heavy mantle which she had worn during her journey of the preceding day.

As the morning dawned, she was awakened by her companion, and found herself strengthened and revived by her slumbers. The bark had already anchored near a wild and uninhabited part of the shore of Savoy, where, although villages might be discerned afar off, there was no immediate appearance of a human dwelling. Refreshments were placed upon the deck, after partaking of which they left the vessel; and on landing, Julia found that preparations had been made for their arrival. A low and ordinary *cabriolet* had been destined for her and her female companion, while a *char* was provided for the men, in which they placed their wounded associate; and the vehicles proceeded onward, until they reached the foot of a mountain, that they slowly ascended.

At noon the travellers approached the decayed and ruined outworks of one of those

those numerous castles still to be found in Savoy, and which are generally placed in lofty and commanding situations, serving formerly to command the plains below; and sometimes, as in the present case, destined to guard the passes of the mountains against the invasions of an enemy. The road was encumbered with the ruins of the defences, which extended to a distance around the principal edifice, and they had already crossed two successive fosses, which the ruins had filled up, and rendered useless, when they arrived at the entrance to the area in which the castle was placed, and which, although falling fast to decay, still served to impede, when necessary, admission to the interior.

Crossing the pont-levis, the building, which had been hitherto concealed by the height of the external walls, was developed to view; and although long deserted by its once powerful proprie-

tors, and diminished in extent and strength, gave evidence of its ancient solidity and grandeur.

Entering, Julia was struck by the imposing effect of the ancient hall, where once the numerous retainers of its baronial owners had assembled, and which was calculated to accommodate within its precincts the multitude of dependants who once sought shelter, or prepared for war, beneath its roof. Arms and materials formerly used for the chase or combat, still hung against the walls, although the brilliancy they once possessed was now obscured by age and neglect, ; and a few tattered banners, which centuries of dust had covered, still marked the estrade where, in all the pomp of feudal pride, the marshal and powerful chiefs presided over their hardy but submissive followers, at council or at feast, in devising military operations, or in participating in the revelry of triumph over their

their less fortunate rivals. In its vast extent, no person was however to be seen but those by whom Julia had been accompanied; and it was not until her conductor had long and loudly shouted, that a man was seen approaching by one of the doors at the extremity of the hall. His dress and figure corresponded with what Julia had often heard of those of the bandits and smugglers, that, after the reverses which the French arms had sustained, returned fearlessly to the occupation which they had been forced to resign by the measures of an active police, and eagerly took advantage of the unsettled state of the countries around, to spread terror and alarm in the more peaceful villages, by the frequency and extent of their depredations and cruelty.

"A blessed time," said Julia's conductor, "you have kept us here shouting and hallooing!"

"I was obliged to put things in order in the rooms above, which have not been opened this many a year," he answered: "but where's my son?—where's Marco?—if you have left him behind," he observed, with a threatening gesture towards Ursule, "you had better not have come."

"He is here," replied Ursule; "but I told you what it would end in. Had you taken my advice, Roderigo——"

"Silence, fiend!" he exclaimed, as he quitted the apartment to ascertain the misfortune her words implied; but instantly returned with an air of grief, anger, and menace.—"Who has done this?—whose hand has caused it?—tell me directly!" he furiously cried, in seizing the female with violence—"Speak, or by heavens I shall pierce you to the heart, foul sorceress!"

"Loose your hold, Roderigo," said Julia's conductor, in interfering to save the

the woman from the ruffian's grasp; "it is the chance of war: come, man, let your sister free, and I will tell you the cause of the accident."

"I shall be revenged, however, in house or field, in church—ay, at the very altar will I have his blood, be he who he may!"

"You are already," said the conductor. "Pietro will tell you his arm it was that revenged the injury Marco received."

"Pietro! the coward! d——n him! were it not for him, it would not have happened; if Marco dies, let him look to it. But why do I stand talking here, while the lad lies there on the ground alone!"

"Let us be gone," said Ursule; "it is not safe to be in Roderigo's way when he is in one of his fits. He will be calmer some time hence. Do not await his return, or we may repent it."

They quitted the hall, and ascending to an upper story, they entered a suite of chambers still retaining the relics of ancient magnificence; passing which they arrived at a small room, which had evidently been occupied long after the other apartments had been abandoned. The windows were still whole, the fresco of the walls still retained some of the brilliancy of its former colours; chairs, and a table of more modern style, and in better preservation than the furniture in general, had been hastily arranged; a fire burned in the chimney: a bed was placed at each end, destined for Julia and her companion.

"It is many a long year since I have been here," said the latter, and Julia deemed she shuddered as she spoke, "and things are changed since then. I little thought ever to have visited it again." As she stooped to take something from the

the ground which attracted her attention, she continued, in a tone different from that which she had hitherto assumed, and which expressed more of sympathy and sorrow than Julia could believe her to have possessed—"Here is her mandolin, poor lady! often have I heard her touch its chords; and as from that casement she would regard the setting sun, she would produce sounds so sweet and melancholy, that the tears have often come to her eyes: but that time is past—would I had never known it! what misery and anguish should I not have escaped!"

"Of whom do you speak, Ursule?" demanded Julia.

"I dare not tell you, lady; I thought my heart was hardened, and my eyes tearless, and long they have been so; but when I entered these walls, fifteen long years since, I was happy, content, and innocent; I left them with a seared

conscience and a guilty mind: I became the associate of villains, and their partner in crime; but the past returns like the remembrance of my native fields, clothed in sunshine and verdure, while the present is dark, and drear, and gloomy, as these mountains that surround us."

"But never," said Julia, "did the penitent plead vainly for the blessed intercession of our Lady, Ursule: hope triumphs over error, and pardon is never withheld where sought with piety and sincerity."

"Oh, I have knelt in bitterness and sorrow to the Blessed Virgin; but while she seemed to smile with holy pity on all around, to me her look was that of anger and denial; until one night, I never can forget it, while sunk in sleep, her divine vision appeared to my enraptured sight, and I heard the angelic choir chaunt peace and pardon to my guilty

guilty soul. I awoke in a state of bliss I shall ne'er know more. I was alone. My husband and my son had left me to pursue their lawless traffic, and promised to return with the morrow's sun; and faithful were they to their promise. Ere that sun arose, they were borne to my arms, but silent, cold, and dead. They died in crime and guilt, to which I urged them. Madness seized me. Husbandless, childless, hopeless—in my rage, I defied the host of heaven! I spurned the promises I had received! I mocked with fury all once held holy—Ay, lady, even on my knees, before the holiest, I did so. Now is there hope!" she exclaimed, pacing rapidly the room, in a state of agitation bordering upon frenzy, with wild gesticulation, which marked the horrors of her wretched state.

Julia dared not interrupt the expression

sion of feeling thus violently evinced by her companion, but she cherished the idea that the proofs of compunction she had shewn promised that she yet might find through her the means of liberty and restoration to her friends.

After the mental excitement created by the remembrance of the past had in some degree subsided, Ursule sat for a length of time in silence, her face covered by her hands, until restored to a state of comparative calmness, she arose, and without speaking left the room. As she shut the door, Julia heard her bolt it without, and she remained at the casement for several hours, lost in melancholy retrospection, until the return of her companion with lights first informed her of the period which had elapsed, while she had given herself up to the remembrance of those dear objects of affection from which she had been

been so cruelly divided. As Ursule placed her supper on the table, she was pleased to find that she would not be disturbed by the intrusion of any of the men who had accompanied her; and she determined, if possible, to ascertain what were their future intentions with respect to her.

Having placed the supper on the table, Ursule drew it towards the fire, and closing the curtains of the window, pressed Julia to partake of the meal; while the latter, who had passed nearly the entire day without refreshment, was glad to share the repast, particularly in the company of one of her own sex, and unattended by the disgusting company of the men with whom she had travelled.

Ursule often looked around her, at objects once familiar to her, with signs of

of fear, interest, and sorrow, that deprived her of the repellent and ferocious character which she had shewn at their first meeting; and while many a sigh attested that she was yet open to the influence of better feelings, she assumed towards Julia a tone and manner equally unhoped for and agreeable, as it was in contrast with her previous conduct.

"How long do we remain here?" demanded Julia.

"Until to-morrow, probably, mademoiselle; or it may be longer, as Roderigo, who arrived here this morning, reports that the journey of the marchese Graziani, his master, to this place, may be delayed; but as soon as he comes, they will set out for Lombardy."

"Are you acquainted with the marchese, Ursule?"

"Alas! to my shame and sorrow, lady! But I have not seen him since I parted

parted with him here: would I had never known him!"

"Does the castle belong to him?"

"He took possession of it on the death of his cousin, the signora Teresa, but, it is said, has never visited it since that time. She died in this room," said Ursule, drawing her chair instinctively closer to that of Julia, while her voice sank, and became tremulous. "She died, lady, in my arms, on that very couch."

As she pointed to the spot, she shuddered, and her face became pale; but, as if her mind was occupied irresistibly by the past, she could not refrain continuing the subject, although the hoarse but low tones in which she spoke, and the occasional difficulty of respiration she evinced, proved the feeling by which she was influenced.—"It seems to me but yesterday: she had been upon her knees at prayer, and longer than usual; and

and when her orisons were ended, she strove to rise, but could not.—'Help me, Ursule,' she said, 'for my limbs are dead beneath me, and I cannot move!' When I had raised her, she was unable to stir; but I placed her on my knees, and she threw her arms about my neck, and clasped me, as if in terror. While I felt that arm upon my cheek grow cold, and looked upon her pale and innocent features, as she blessed me for my look of pity—oh, lady, had I at that moment all the world's treasure, I would have cast it from me, not to have been there! could I with my life have saved her—but it was too late—the deed was done!" and, unable to proceed, she uttered a groan, and seemed ready to fall from her seat.

Julia poured out hastily a glass of wine, and made her swallow it; and she soon revived, in some degree; but her features

features were still marked by horror, grief, and terror.

"What deed, Ursule?" said Julia, who could not refrain from continuing the conversation.

"One moment, lady! I would I were at the confessional, for my heart is burthened!" After a pause, she proceeded. "I knew it not then—Holy Mary be witness to my truth, I knew it not! But soon the fatal secret was revealed: as I watched her lifeless form, it became black and swollen—her features changed fearfully—her eyes slowly emerged from beneath their closed lids—they were fixed on me! I dared not move—I could not turn away my sight—I was enchained, rivetted to the spot—still, still they opened more! Great God, have mercy! she died by poison!"

The last words were uttered in a whisper,

whisper, as Ursule grasped Julia's arm with force, while her wild and fearful glance was directed with fear and horror towards the couch.

Julia became influenced by the terror of her companion, and both remained for some time silent, until she could not forbear interrupting it, from the deep interest she took in the relation.—"And you, Ursule?"

"Oh no, no, lady! I have said I knew it not then—but, great God! it was my hand administered the drug! I was her guard, her rival, and her foe! I used her harshly, cruelly—in the transport of jealousy, I have even struck her! I was her murderer!—and yet her last words blessed me, because I shewed a mark of pity; for it was long since she had met with it: but she is in heaven, and I——" Again she stopped, overpowered by her feelings.

"Was

" Was it the marchese Graziani?"

" He sought her hand, lady; but it was already given in secret to another. Her husband fell beneath the stiletto of a hired assassin: the villain who had caused his death, again urged his suit: his blood-stained hand was rejected with horror and disgust! Revenge and avarice succeeded to his former passion—the child she bore in her bosom would have been heir to large domains—she was seized, and conveyed to these fatal walls, and when she died, the marchese Graziani became possessor of her wealth."

" Heaven forgive you, wretched woman!" exclaimed Julia, in rising, and pacing the room; " Heaven forgive you, for the past and present! You have a dread account to render—and a life of prayer and penitence can scarcely atone for your many crimes! Plead, oh, let me entreat, let me supplicate you! plead

to

to our Blessed Lady for forgiveness! tremble at the punishment that awaits you, and pause in your career of crime, ere it be too late, and you be summoned to the bar of heaven!"

"Never did I think that I should feel as I do now; but these walls—this place—have awakened me to sorrow! Oh that I had hope that tears and prayers could save me!"

"They can, they will, Ursule! Turn instantly from the paths of guilt!—prove your sincerity by unhesitating penitence, and you may yet gain the meed of pardon—the assurance of hope!"

"Oh, lady, long—too long have I derided all that is sacred! yet long I refused to see him who had been the cause of my shame and guilt; but poverty, and want, and sin, overcame the only good resolution I had adhered to. His gold again seduced me to his service. But where can I go?—what will be my fate? I

am

am linked to a band of villains, who are devoted to him, and my life would be the forfeit—I should be sacrificed, even upon suspicion, with all my offences on my head!"

"Fear not," said Julia, "I will protect you; I have friends, and power to do so. You shall be removed far from the enemies you dread—you shall have the benefit of priestly counsel, the means of maintenance, and of redeeming yet your errors."

"Were it so——" she said, but at the moment a man's step in the gallery put an end to her discourse; and soon afterwards the voice of Roderigo was heard at the door.

"Open the door, Ursule; I must see all safe before I retire."

As he entered, he looked around, and perceiving those he sought, wished them a sullen "good night," and in departing, bolted the door without.

Thev

They listened to his retiring footsteps in silence, until Ursule addressed Julia—"Would you not go to rest, lady?—you must be weary. For me, I shall not lie down; I could not sleep, for my heart is full to bursting."

"Not yet, Ursule: hear me—have we not the means of escape? What is our distance from the nearest town?"

"We are about a league and a half from the shores of the lake; and I know every step of our way in the descent through the wood: but it would be impossible to elude Roderigo and his companions. Were I discovered, Holy Virgin! although the same mother bore us, he would murder me without remorse."

"Could we but reach the village, we should be in safety," observed Julia; "the moon is up, and we might gain the town with ease, were we once beyond

yond these walls; but that I fear is the greatest difficulty, and to-morrow will be too late."

Ursule sat in meditation for some time, ruminating the proposal of Julia, and the consequences of an attempt at flight; but the change operated upon her character, if sudden, was positive; and her reflections at length rendered her eager to rescue the prisoner, and become the partner of her flight.

"We must be cautious, lady, if we would succeed," she at length observed to Julia.

"But the means, Ursule? the door is barred without, and the windows are too distant from the ground."

Seizing a light, Ursule in silence proceeded to remove the couch destined for Julia, and having with a slight effort

drawn it from the wall, shewed a door which it had concealed — "Roderigo knows little of the castle; this door opens on a staircase in the wall, leading to the gallery in the chapel, and was used by the family when they would hear mass: we may make the attempt, but I fear the chapel door will be closed. Wrap yourself, lady, in this cloak," she said, in covering Julia with the mantle she had worn during the journey; "we must leave the lights here, not to excite suspicion or alarm, and grope our way as well as we can. Be silent, lady —give me your hand—we must tread cautiously."

Groping their path, they descended a flight of steps, which led to a narrow passage, through which they made their way in utter darkness, until they again reached a few steps, and found themselves in the gallery of the chapel. The moon

moon shone upon the naked and deserted altar opposite; but the rest of the building was buried in obscurity. The cold night breeze blew through the broken casements of the dismantled edifice, and the hopes of Julia gained force, as they paused to listen ere they ventured further.

"Hark! heard you not a noise?" she whispered to her companion; "listen—it is near us!"

Ursule approached the front of the gallery, and remained attentive to the sound—"It is nothing lady, but the torn escutcheon of the signora Teresa—the wind disturbs it: let us proceed."

Taking her hand, Ursule conducted Julia down the steps leading to the floor of the chapel, and they proceeded up the aisle towards the altar, to attain a small door in the sanctuary, which Ursule in-

formed her was only bolted within, while the great entrance was strongly secured. Nothing occurred to alarm them until they arrived within the pale, when their passage was impeded by some obstacle they could not define. Anxious to ascertain its nature, Julia extended her arm, but withdrew it with horror, in finding it had encountered the cold and lifeless features of a corpse.

Almost fainting with terror, she clung to her companion, who seemed equally terrified with herself; and ere they had recovered their affright, steps were heard approaching from the castle. — "Be quick, Ursule," whispered Julia; "if we but reach the door, we yet are safe."

Without reply, Ursule drew her forward, and having gained the spot she sought,

sought, gently unbolted a small door, but in shutting it, the wind drove it with a degree of violence, the sound of which reechoed through the chapel.

The joy of Julia at finding herself in the open air was of short duration, for at the same moment noises were heard proceeding from the chapel; and ere they gained the court, the steps of persons in pursuit were distinctly gaining on them, and they were joined by their pursuers ere they could adopt any means of concealment or escape.

"Traitress!" exclaimed Roderigo, as he seized Ursule with fury, "is this your boasted fidelity? you would betray us, sorceress! but, rely upon it, you shall repent it the longest day you have to live.—Pietro, take charge of the lady, while I conduct my flesh and blood where, I warrant her, she wont escape,

as long as chains and bars can prevent her."

Saying this, Ursule was led into the castle by her ferocious brother, and Julia was again conducted towards the chapel by Pietro.

As they passed near the altar, she could not refrain from casting a glance at the spot where she had been so terrified, and to her astonishment, perceived a body stretched upon a table, in the habiliments of the grave.

"It is Marco, signora," said Pietro, observing her eyes fixed upon the corpse; "he died this night, and will be buried here in a few hours; had not Roderigo resolved to visit the body from time to time, you would by this time perhaps have been out of our reach; but you are safe now, believe me, signora. Here

is

is Roderigo's chamber, where you will be safer than above; and you will permit me to guard against any other plot." So saying, he placed the light on the table, and retired, firmly securing the doors to prevent escape.

Julia threw herself, weary, sick, and disappointed, upon a sofa placed in the room, and, fatigued with her exertions, soon fell into a profound slumber, from which she was aroused at sunrise by a loud knocking at her door.

"You must arise, signora," said Pietro; "an express has arrived from his *eccellenza*, who attends us, and we must hasten our departure. The carriage is ready, and we only wait for you."

Rising reluctantly, Julia slowly made her preparations for departure; and having partaken of a slight refreshment,

and in vain having hoped to see or hear of the unfortunate Ursule, was at length obliged to leave the castle.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

Mark, Jew! *Merchant of Venice.*

The Trial.

It is now time to turn our regards to the country wherein the earlier transactions of this history had place, although our retrospection will not extend to the period in which we lost sight of the unhappy Mrs. Everard, but to that which almost immediately preceded the departure of Mr. Everard from his chateau, to revisit the shores of England. It was shortly previous to the latter event that colonel, formerly major, Montrose had returned to England, after having been employed, since he left India, for many

years on various occasions in Mediterranean countries, and latterly served with distinguished honour in the Peninsular campaign. At the close of that memorable contest, and in one of the latest battles which was fought on the French territory, he was so severely wounded, that he became incapable of continuing longer in active service; and by the courtesy of the enemy he was permitted to proceed to Bourdeaux, where he embarked for his native country. From his cousin, Mrs. Vernon, he experienced all the care and tenderness which she could demonstrate, and her kind attentions, united to medical skill, soon repaired the injuries of war; but his intention of rejoining his glorious chief was rendered abortive, by events which at that moment terminated the operations of the British general, with equal honour to himself and glory to his country.—"And no further information has been ever gained

gained of the unhappy Mrs, Everard?" he inquired of his cousin, as he sat with her during his state of convalescence.

"None other than what I stated in my letters to you," replied Mrs. Vernon. "She lives, as monsieur Reymond, her agent, leads me to hope; but all my entreaties have never enabled me to acquire further information."

"It was an unhappy business, and fate seems to have doomed her to encounter every obstacle, in the attempt at justification of her conduct; for I have been long internally persuaded of her innocence, and the idea of her sufferings has often preyed upon my mind in foreign lands. Had my duty permitted me to remain in England but for a short period, much of the painful mystery, I am convinced, would have been explained; but the years which have elapsed are, I fear, a fatal barrier to any satisfactory development of the truth."

"I used every endeavour," said Mrs. Vernon, "to be serviceable to her; but her despair put it out of my power to be useful."

"What is past cannot be remedied; but as I am now turned loose upon the world, I am disposed in the next summer to pay Everard a visit in Switzerland, if I thought I could persuade you, my dear Anne, to accompany me."

"I should enjoy the journey extremely, as I am anxious to see Julia, who, I have been given to understand, has become a lovely young woman. We might perhaps succeed in inducing her father to return to England, where, in fact, his presence will soon be necessary."

"How so?"

"The protracted illness of his brother Thomas, the actual lord Bridgenorth, they say, fast approaches to a fatal conclusion."

"Has he no children?"

"His

"His eldest son, as I wrote you at the time, died shortly after Mr. Everard's departure from this country; the second and only surviving child was thrown from a horse about a year since, and the accident occasioned his immediate death. His father became wholly inconsolable, and his immoderate grief affected his constitution to that degree, that he has long lingered, without hopes being entertained of his recovery; and there is little doubt our friend will soon inherit the estates and title."

"If he do not return before the ensuing summer, we will intrude ourselves upon his quarters then. I have been so long accustomed to a roaming life, that I shall never be able to remain quiet; and as I have your promise, we shall commence our march in the spring."

"Agreed, colonel; but as to your roving inclination, you should sit down content with competence and scars, rank and glory."

"Oh,

"Oh, I should soon become a surly misanthropic old bachelor, to scare little children, and be quizzed by the girls."

"On the contrary, it is in your power to avert the fate you dread, as it is in your disposition, I am sure, to shun it. I hope you will meet with some fair one calculated to ensure your happiness for life."

"And who do you think, Anne, would accept a wounded soldier, whose whole discourse is confined to battles and campaigns—whose refinement has been derived from a mess-table—his manners polished at parade—whose saloon has been a tent—his couch a gun-carriage—a grenadier his footboy—and who would make his wife blush daily at her husband's ignorance of society and manners?"

"You do yourself wrong, I assure you; few are more calculated for domestic

tic happiness, and likely to ensure its duration, than yourself; and the frank manner of a soldier will endure and be grateful, when the transient graces of our modern dandies have faded with their momentary reputation."

"Then, to be serious, and most serious, my dear Anne, I have anxiously reflected upon the subject; and could I meet with a meritorious woman, who would be content to hear me 'fight my battles o'er again,' I should make her my commander-in-chief during life, *vice* lord Wellington superseded."

"A little patience, my dear colonel, and you will find many to your taste, and on whom you may repose your confidence, and who, in return, will ensure your felicity."

"Thank you, Anne; but one will be enough."

"Certainly; but you will have opportunity to choose."

"My

"My choice is already fixed, fair cousin, and long has been so."

An involuntary start on the part of Mrs. Vernon, and the heightened colour of her cheeks, would have induced a disinterested spectator to believe that the intelligence thus suddenly imparted had affected her; but she was enabled to hide her embarrassment, and reply to the observation with apparent ease—"I hope you have not left your heart in Sicily or Spain, for I am a true Englishwoman in my prejudices, if they be such, in favour of my countrywomen; and, with the preeminent character they bear, I should be sorry—that is, I would have preferred, that your affections had been rather fixed on one of your own country than on a foreigner."

"Do not imagine that I alluded to a signora or a donna; were I to enlist one of them for unlimited service, I should soon be obliged to dismiss her for being absent

absent without leave, or cashier her, by sentence of court-martial, for conduct unbecoming a soldier's wife and a gentlewoman. No, no, they are mercenaries, Anne, who only look to the bounty, but are ever absent from duty."

"Then since you landed, colonel, you have certainly lost no time in your pursuit; and, without it be some 'pretty Poll of Plymouth,' I am quite at a loss to imagine where you have placed your affections."

"It is here, my beloved Anne," as he knelt to his fair cousin, and seized her hand—"it is here my best hopes are centered—here, where my love has for years been bestowed. Long have I concealed my sincere, my ardent passion; but duty forbade the indulgence of hope until this moment. This dear hand holds the balance of my future peace—will you, my lovely Anne, my beauteous cousin, pardon the abruptness

of

of this avowal? will you accept the offer of one who does not esteem himself worthy of you, but still dares to hope? will you ensure my bliss?"

"Really," exclaimed Mrs. Vernon, blushing, and confused, "this is so unexpected, that I can only say——"

"You accept my suit, sweet cousin."

"Rise, colonel; should we be discovered—let me entreat you to rise."

"Not until those bright lips pronounce my doom."

"Do quit that posture, and—and—well then, you obstinate wretch, yes!" she exclaimed, escaping from his hold, and flying to the door; but ere she reached it, her lover held her in his fond embrace, and sealed his thanks upon her lips, so long, that it was not until steps were heard upon the stairs that he allowed his lovely prize to escape.

After this short, but successful courtship,

ship, a limited period intervened ere colonel Montrose led his fair cousin to the altar, and sacrificed the victor's laurels at the shrine of beauty.

A few days subsequent to his marriage, and on one of the dark and gloomy mornings of November, when the fog that rests on the metropolis of England would be sufficient to produce more than mortal alarm to one accustomed to

"Cloudless climes and starry skies,"

colonel Montrose left his fair bride, in obedience to a subpœna, requiring him to give evidence at the Justice Hall in the Old Bailey, to the character of a soldier who had long served under him in Spain, but who had been indicted for some offence. On reaching that celebrated abode of crime, he found it impossible to attain the precincts of the court, so completely was the spot thronged

thronged by the crowds, interested, by curiosity or sympathy, in the fate of the many unhappy persons who were summoned to trial; but anxious to perform the duty he had undertaken, he was at length admitted, and, in consideration of his rank, was permitted to take his seat upon the bench. Having stated, when called upon, the prior conduct of the prisoner, and attested many circumstances in proof of his former good character, he was pleased to find that his testimony had induced the jury to return a verdict of not guilty, and the discharge of the accused instantly took place.

As he had not before witnessed the proceedings of a court of criminal jurisdiction, he awaited the cause next in rotation, and observed a female placed at the bar, apparently between forty and fifty years of age, of appearance so respectable,

respectable, and a demeanour so superior to what he could have expected, that he felt immediately warmly interested in the fate of the unfortunate woman, and prepared to give an attentive ear to the charge upon which she was accused. After the arraignment, and impanelling of the jury, the indictment was read, and the counsel for the prosecution rose to state the facts which inculpated the prisoner. He observed, that the crime of forgery was that on which she had been arraigned, and that the severest penalties of the law were attached to the offence; that the present was distinguished by two remarkable features from ordinary cases, namely, the lapse of time since the fraud was committed, and the nature of the proof which he understood would be adduced on the defence. That, as to the first, it would be proved not to have been occasioned by the neglect of the prosecutor; and,

and, in regard to the second, he entreated the court to scrutinize its character ere it was received with credit.

The prosecutor was then examined, and he deposed, that he was resident in London, but twelve years since kept a shop at ——, in Northumberland—that at that period a bill of exchange was presented to him for payment, drawn by the prisoner, to which his name was placed as acceptor, for the sum of two hundred pounds—that having refused payment, as his pretended acceptance was a forgery, he was arrested, and, to procure his liberty, forced to discharge it—that although he had known the prisoner by sight, he had had no transactions with her—that he had immediately given information to the police; but after every exertion, they could only ascertain that she had then recently been in the service of a Mr. Everard, who

who had left England; and no information was gained respecting her until within the last month, when he received an anonymous letter by the post, informing him of her retreat, by means of which her person was secured—that, upon her arrest, she confessed her guilt before the officer of justice, and offered him, if he would not prosecute, a box of jewels, which were then produced, of considerable value, and which, she represented, had been bequeathed her by a lady she had served, whose initials are upon them—that the prisoner had always gone by the name of Elizabeth Edwards, although her proper denomination was that as stated in the indictment, of Waters.

During this narration, the interest of the colonel became intense, and he recognized at its conclusion the former housekeeper of his friend, while, as he regarded

regarded her, she kept her eyes fixed upon him, with apparent recollection of his person, but with the composed and assured look which innocence might be supposed to assume.

The person who had discounted or advanced money upon the bill to the prisoner, was then called, and his evidence fully implicated her in the forgery; and he was succeeded by the officers of police, who had arrested her, and who confirmed the circumstances of confession, the proffered bribe, and the identity of the jewels. The evidence for the prosecution here terminated.

Notwithstanding the awful situation in which she was placed, by the clear and decisive evidence which had been given against her, when called upon for her defence, Mrs. Edwards, with a degree of tranquil firmness, calculated to strengthen

strengthen her assertions, entered upon a statement, that imputed to those who had appeared, a base and guilty conspiracy, which had for its object the possession of the jewels exhibited to the court, under the menace of a charge of forgery; and that, on her endeavouring to retain her property, she had been imprisoned, arraigned, and sworn to, as the author of an act which placed her life in peril. She went on to declare, that she should produce witnesses of acknowledged respectability, to repel the suspicious testimony of the police officers, who were interested in her conviction, in a pecuniary point of view, as they would receive the price of blood; and protesting most solemnly her entire innocence, she concluded an address, that from her air and manner in pronouncing it, made a profound impression upon the court.

The first person who appeared in her favour, was a woman of advanced age and prodigious size, but of respectable appearance. With much precision, she stated that she had been long acquainted with the prosecutor and prisoner, the latter of whom had lived with her for many years. That the prosecutor had once paid his addresses to Mrs. Edwards, actuated by the knowledge of her being in possession of jewels, bequeathed her by a deceased mistress; but his suit having been repeatedly rejected, he proposed to the witness, some short time before, to aid him in the design he entertained of procuring them, by menacing her with an act of forgery of a bill, which he would produce, but which was in fact genuine; and that the witness should participate in the profits of the prize. That on her remonstrating with him on the iniquity of his proposal, he informed her that she need not dread

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the consequences, as he had a friend in an officer of police, who would assist in the execution of the plot, on promise of deriving benefit from it. That on the day of the prisoner's arrest, she was surprised by the entrance of the prosecutor and the Bow-street officer, who seized the prisoner and her jewels, and conducted her to prison; while she positively denied any admission of guilt by the prisoner, whom she further stated had never resided in Northumberland.

Having concluded her statement coherently, and without hesitation, although in vulgar language, she was leaving the court, when the counsel for the prosecution stated his desire of putting to her some questions, and rose for the purpose.—"What business do you pursue, good woman?"

"None; I lives upon what I has saved from my former purfession."

"What trade?"

"That of a pawnbroker, in Wych-street, in the Strand; and few people were more genteel in that line, thof I says it; and when I retired, I left a good thing to my nevvy, Nat Davis, who keeps up the concarn."

"Does your nephew read and write?"

"As well as yourself, I guess, mister; and it was I paid for his hiddication, when he hadn't a friend in the world to help himself with."

"Did you ever see him write?"

"What a question! To be sure I has, a million of times! it was he as kept the accounts of the shop."

"Would you know his handwriting were you to see it?"

"Lawk, yes, to be sure: he flourishes his *D* all round his *N*, that it looks like a spider with a fly in his web, as I often says."

"Any thing like that?" demanded the counsel, producing a paper.

"Why,

"Why, Lord love ye, that's Nat, every inch of him: I would swear to it amongst a thousand."

"You are positive that's your nephew's handwriting?"

"If I shouldn't know, who should? —that's his, upon my Bible oath."

"It was extremely charitable in you to bestow upon your nephew an advantage which you do not appear to possess yourself, good woman, in affording him the education you state."

"I don't know what you means, mister, by your insinivation," exclaimed the old lady, indignantly; "but if my pen don't gallop like Nat's, I beg you to know I can put my pothooks and hangers together as well as another; I arn't so bad as all that neither."

"Do you intend to say, good woman, that had you a lawsuit, and I were your counsel, you would be able to write me a letter of business?"

"That's what I does; and you wouldn't be the first lawyer I has written to either," she replied, tossing her head, with an air of superiority and disdain, at a doubt of her qualifications.

"To whom of the profession, allow me to ask, have you ever written?"

"Why, to a gentleman as good as yourself, thof he's dead and gone; my lawyer was Mr. Marmaduke Vavasour; and plain Mary Thomas as I stands here, he didn't scorn a crosspendance with me."

"Then you were intimate with the deceased Mr. Vavasour?"

"We were as well together, poor gentleman, as my three golden balls were, as I used to say."

"Now look at that letter," coolly demanded the advocate, in handing a large enclosure for the witness's perusal.

The sight of the document had the effect

effect which an accusing spirit might produce upon the blood-stained murderer. Her colour fled her face—her limbs trembled beneath excessive agitation—and she was obliged to be supported from falling to the ground.

"I demand," he resumed, "upon your oath, and as you shall appear at the bar of heaven, whose is that letter?"

"Mine," feebly articulated the witness.

"And the paper enclosed?"

"The prisoner's."

"Enough," observed the advocate; "let her be taken out, and kept from the view of her nephew."

The perusal of the papers she had deposed to, as derived from her nephew, the prisoner, and herself, was deferred, at the instance of the counsel, until after the examination of the next witness.

Mr. Nathan Davis was the next person who entered the box, and he stepped forward with a degree of pert vivacity and assurance, intended to pass for an air of candour and sincerity. Without hesitation, he confidently affirmed all his worthy aunt had asserted; and with evident satisfaction was about to quit the court as he concluded, when he was unexpectedly recalled.

"You are a pawnbroker, you state, Mr. Davis," observed the counsel for the prosecution.

"Not exactly, sir, begging your pardon —don't sport the three balls; I manage a depot of articles à-la-mode in dress."

"You succeeded your aunt, Mary Thomas, in trade, I believe."

"In the profession, if you please, sir; it's no longer a trade, as I has two young gentlemen pupils, one who teaches my daughter the arp and pannyforty, and another

another who gives her lessons in cowtillions, walses, and quod-rills, on Mr. Wilson's plan."

"We are not desirous of learning your family arrangements, sir; answer to the purpose. When your aunt had the shop, who kept her books?"

"Why, the books kept her, he, he! but I made the entries, as aunty's scribble was rather ineligible."

"She has seen you write, I presume."

"Lord, that she has! often enough, for that matter; she was as sharp as a needle: she got it in her head that I cheated the customers, and kept the odd shillings, but it was all my eye."

"You would know your own hand-writing again, naturally."

"Hem! Maybe ay—maybe no; I writes differently, according to the pen I has; I couldn't swear, as one may say."

"Look at that paper. Is it your hand-writing?"

"No," readily answered Nat, ere he had time to view it, "it is none of mine, I swear so."

"You are too ready, sir," observed the judge, "to deny what you have not examined. Take that paper in your hand; peruse it leisurely, and answer, with due consideration to the oath you have taken, and on the responsibility of that oath."

While the paper shook in his trembling hand, he replied, with less assurance than before, and in an under-tone of voice—"I never saw this paper before, my lord."

"Return it to me," said the counsel, and then proceeded—"you say your shop is now become a fashionable depot; do you mean to say that you do not receive articles in pledge or pawn?"

The confidence of the witness returned, as he saw the subject of the letter abandoned, and he replied, with his former

former pertness—"To oblige customers, I advance money on moveable property."

"What do you term moveable property?"

"Watches and the like."

"To indulge my curiosity as to your novel definition of moveable property, will you permit me to see your watch?"

"With pleasure, sir," said Nat, smiling and smirking as he handed it to his interrogator, who, after slightly examining it, to the surprise of the owner, passed it to the bench for inspection.

"Will you have the goodness, sir, to explain to the court the characters engraven on your seal—it seems of curious workmanship?"

The delighted Nat, pleased at the turn things had taken, and at the admiration the seal had attracted, with an air of vanity answered—"The stone, my lord, is a gem, said to have been

worn by one of our people, prior to the fall of Jerusalem, as a talisman; the characters have reference to the event with which the city of our religion was then threatened. It was brought from Candia, and none other of the kind exists at present."

"You naturally have a care of it proportionate to its worth and singularity?"

"It has not been out of my hands, until now, for several years."

"Now, Mr. Davis, regard the impression on the wafer of the letter you deny all knowledge of."

"Hem—Hem!" uttered the discomfited Jew, at the same time darting from the witness's box, with an intent to escape; but he was soon seized, and ordered by the court to be kept in custody, together with his venerable relative.

With the most intense anxiety the colonel

colonel had listened to the proceedings, and, with astonishment, had recognized in Nathan the person who, on the evening of Mrs. Everard's elopement, had given him the information confirmatory of the fact, and of her guilt at the masquerade. The appearance of the jewels, with the evident connection between Nathan and the prisoner, at once tended to reveal the mystery which had shrouded the event; but if his doubts of Mrs. Everard's guilt had been strengthened, they were soon destined to give place to a conviction of her innocence.

On the removal of Nathan, the prisoner was demanded if she had any other witnesses to produce.

As she slowly raised her head to reply, her eye fell with a timid and supplicating glance on colonel Montrose; and with the look of horror with which the

despairing

despairing mariner consults the last fragile means of salvation ere the vessel parts asunder, she faintly observed—"Without that gentleman will speak for me, I am lost!"

All eyes were turned towards the person she had indicated; and the court inquired if he appeared as a witness for the defence?

"My presence on this occasion," he replied, "was wholly undesigned. More I must refrain from saying; but will leave it to the prisoner's judgment to renew her call upon me."

Her counsel communicated with her a few moments, and on regaining his place, stated—"That the prisoner had no further witness."

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death?

Fair Penitent, Act V. Scene 1.

The Departure.

THE letters were now read. The first, discovered by means of the seal, was the anonymous communication made by Nathan to the prosecutor, which led to the prisoner's apprehension, and to which act he had been induced, in order to extinguish a debt due by him to Mrs. Edwards, for the payment of which she had applied recently, and with a degree of urgency, which, in exciting his vengeance and cupidity, finally entailed ruin on himself. The succeeding packet was of

of much greater interest to the colonel, and, as the court was informed by the counsel for the crown, had been thus obtained.

When the inquest was holden on the body of Mr. Vavasour, many years preceding, the want of evidence, as to the circumstances of death, induced the coroner to recur to the papers of the deceased, amongst which that in question had been found; and as it seemed to refer to a conspiracy of an atrocious nature, and would probably, in the course of time, be material to the purposes of justice, it was remitted to the magistrates of police, where it had remained until the arrest of the prisoner for forgery, when it was remitted to the officers of the crown. Being in some degree immediately relative to the cause, it was also considered essential, as affecting the defence, in demonstrating the character

of

of the prisoner, and the persons who appeared in her support, and was to the following effect:—

"*To Mara-duke Vavasour, Esq.*

"Wych-street, February 21, 18—.

"HONOURED SUR,

"As u daricted, my nevvy, Nat and I has seen Mrs. E——, who is afeard as how Mr. Ever-hard, or his frind, major Munrose, has got an inkling about the old acquaintans between she and u, as the inklosed will give you to know, from Mrs. E.'s self. I has procur'd a small house, as you darected, on Sit-on-ham-common, quite lonely, and sepurate from hany hother. Nat has spoked the man, and he has in consurquance promessed to be on the spot, and du his dooty. I thanks your honor for the Abruhn Newland. E. will leve the

the Jewhells with I. Nat has his story quite pat for the Mask-a-rat; so there is nothing to fear.

"Your devotted sarvant,

"MARY THOMAS."

The inclosure referred to was in the handwriting of Mrs. Edwards, and bore the same direction as the first.

"All is prepared, and no delay must now occur, as suspicions are excited, and it will soon be too late. The affair of Holmes will be known, and its publication will be at once fatal to your plan. Let us be exact in the parts we have to play; for on that will depend the success of our scheme, all other circumstances combining in its favour. On Thursday Mrs. E. dines at the general's: her husband will not return

turn to town before midnight, at the earliest. I shall leave the house at dusk, and meet you where you direct; thence proceed with you to your chambers, and afterwards to the theatre. My disguise is ready, and complete. There, if stratagem does not succeed, force must; and while you bear off the prize, I, like a skilful general, will cover your retreat. She little expects the fate that awaits her. I shall not forget to leave your letter in her cabinet, to mislead her husband; while Nat will drop another at the theatre, at the proper moment. Your liberality towards him and his aunt leaves me no doubt of the fulfilment of your promise to myself, and that you will arrange that affair of Owen for me, and leave me in possession of the jewels; for however you may object, on that point I am determined. The man engaged by Mrs. Thomas will accompany her and myself to Sydenham;

ham; but you must not appear until the next day. Trust to my vengeance towards the name of Everard for preventing her escape. Be firm, and victory is ours.

"E. EDWARDS."

After the letters had been read the jury retired, and shortly returned with the verdict of guilty; after which the audience awaited in solemn silence the awful moment when the judge, investing himself with the sable coif, directed the proclamation commanding silence, which precedes the announcement of the doom inflicted by the law.

The venerable chief, in demonstrating the heinousness of the offence, pathetically exhorted the convicted criminal to repentance, while he precluded all earthly hope of pardon.

As

As the fatal words expired on his lips, a shriek of horror burst from the miserable woman, as, with extended arms, she seemed to supplicate for mercy. As she was borne away, the deep silence of the court was only interrupted by the cries of despair, which were prolonged through the passages whither she was led, until they died away in distance. The colonel left the tribunal, deeply affected by the scene, and impressed by the miraculous discovery, and the merited punishment attending the guilt of Edwards, and her infamous associates.

The ensuing morning, the colonel was summoned to visit the cell of the convict, whom he found in that receptacle of crime, attended by the ordinary and a magistrate, the latter of whom had been also required by the wretched woman. To relieve her oppressed conscience

science from a load of remorse, she stated that she had invited them thither, as until she had made such reparation as was yet in her power to those whom she had injured, she could not make those preparations which her awful state demanded without delay. The details she entered into must have been, in a great degree, already anticipated. She dwelt upon her infamous connexion with lord Bridgenorth, to whom succeeded Mr. Vavasour, whom she had quitted, after possessing herself of property of value. Recognized by him subsequently in Mr. Everard's family, he had recourse to threats and promises, and to the flattery of her desire of vengeance against all connected with her former lordly protector, to aid him in the plan of seduction he had adopted towards her mistress. Foiled in his earliest attempt to gain the affections of Mrs. Everard, he resolved, by stratagem

or

or force, to effect what art and dissimulation had been unable to attain.

" A distant relation," she continued, " who had already defrauded me of the little property left me by my father, but whose knowledge of my crimes rendered her fearless of the consequences, and her equally infamous nephew, who are now both beneath this fatal roof, were, by promise of reward, induced to assist in the execution of the plot against the honour and peace of Mrs. Everard. They secured a lonely house on Sydenham Common, for the reception of the destined victim. I possessed myself of her jewels, on the night of the masquerade, and left in their place a letter, counterfeited as her handwriting, and calculated to mislead Mr. Everard; and, in further confirmation of its tenor, deposited one of my own, addressed to him. Leaving the house, I was met by my

my villainous employer, and we prepared our disguises for the evening; mine being that of a gipsy. The nephew had succeeded in procuring employment at the theatre as a waiter, and was ready to aid our plan. A post-chaise awaited at a short distance from the place, where a man engaged to assist him was placed by Mr. Vavasour. Having changed our first disguises, we kept constantly on the watch, and soon observed Mrs. Everard retire to a small chamber for momentary repose. No time was lost. We followed her, and ere she could call for aid, Mr. Vavasour enveloped her in a large cloak, provided by Davis; and her fears overcoming her, we were enabled to bear her through the crowds with rapidity, as I prevented any obstacle, by alledging that she was under the influence of convulsions. You alone, sir——"

"Good God!" exclaimed the colonel,

"it

" it was she whose struggles I then witnessed, and he the villain who struck me."

" It was him who aimed the blow.—We immediately perceived that the danger of discovery became imminent; we hurried forwards, ere you had recovered from the effects of your surprise, and gaining the street, succeeded in placing her in the carriage, in which I also entered, which drove furiously away, and did not relax in speed until we were out of London. The nephew remained in the theatre to watch your motions, and those of the husband, should he arrive, and by a fictitious tale, and the aid of a note purposely left upon the spot——"

" Miserable woman!"

" The misfortunes of others, not my crimes, are now my purpose. Time flies, and much is to be done—let me proceed. The remembrance of that un-

happy lady preys vulturelike upon my mind. Her tears, her prayers, her supplications, were in vain. A fatal oath was added to what menace, flattery, and vengeance, had engendered of fiend-like passions in my breast. I still preserved my disguise, and arrived at the house; she was placed in a room well secured against escape and flight. Her sufferings overpowered her strength. Her cries still ring in my ears. She called upon her husband and her child, but she was deserted and alone. Possessed by the spirit of the damned, I caught, with anxious joy, those sounds of horror and despair. Within these walls, while others shudder at the sepulchral silence of their cells, they howl around me; and when I seek repose, or pray for peace, they drown my supplications, and louder than heaven's thunder, mock my hopes of mercy.—But I must on.

"The

" The succeeding day wore away, but my employer came not. He was no more, as we soon learned. Fear seized upon us, but the detention of the victim became essential to our own security. Her senses had become disturbed. The ravings of delirium were all she now uttered. I would have sought medical advice, but dared not. Long did she suffer, and weeks passed over our heads while she remained deprived of reason. The hired ruffian had left the house, but the gold of our employer enabled us still to remain there. Nature at length operated in favour of the afflicted lady. Her reason slowly returned, and as she gradually regained a state of consciousness, I shunned her sight, and left to my associates the care she required. Mr. Everard had, as I learned, left England, and our confidence for a time revived; but it was soon ascertained that the loss of the

jewels had attracted the attention of the ministers of justice, and flight became indispensable. Before I departed, I shewed the only act of consideration I had yet evinced towards the unhappy victim of my avarice and revenge, in having her conveyed to her own door, where she was left by the nephew.

"I have little more to add. Our pecuniary resources were yet considerable, and for years we successfully shunned the danger that had menaced us. The jewels had become useless, as I feared to dispose of them; and it was not until the extremity in which I was recently placed by my prosecutor, that I dared to produce them.

"I have finished; yet let me ask of you one question, sir—is Mrs. Everard living?"

"I have reason to hope she is."

"Have I been the cause—the wretched cause, of——" she hesitated for some time.

"I compre-

"I comprehend your meaning," said the colonel, "and I will answer with the truth and frankness your awful position demands. The misery you have caused has been most comprehensive—those who lived but for each other have been long and cruelly divided by your act—by you they have become heart-broken exiles from their home—by you the wretched husband has been induced to stain his hand with blood—by your means a guilty and unrepented wretch has been hurried to his last account—you have rendered a child motherless."

"Spare me! oh spare me!" cried the miserable Edwards; "never can hope spring from beneath the weight of such accumulated sins. The death of the innocent is as the slumber of the just—the summons of the guilty is the trumpet-call to perdition and to punishment!—Save me, as you hope for mercy! If your labour can avail—by your hallowed

office, by the purity, the might of faith, give me but hope—shed on my darkened conscience a ray of mercy, and I will bless you here and hereafter!" She clung convulsively to the minister as she thus addressed him, until overcome by her feelings, she fell upon the ground.

Leaving her to his pious care, the colonel departed with the magistrate, who promised to revisit her as soon as he had extended the confession, of which he had taken notes, and which colonel Montrose prayed him to have, if possible, corroborated by the examinations of the aunt and nephew.

The colonel, on his return home, imparted to Mrs. Montrose the scene of which he had been the witness, and the particulars of Edwards's confession of her guilt. The joy of Mrs. Montrose, on learning the confirmation of her ideas with

with respect to her friend's innocence, was alloyed by the recollection of her former sufferings, the reserve with which her protestations of purity had been met, and the actual concealment of her place of refuge. Years had elapsed since the misery of the unhappy pair had had its origin, and however enthusiastic were her hopes to see them yet united, what change of feeling in heart and disposition might not have occurred! the long-endured sense of mutual wrong might have warped the mind, until conviction could no longer be shaken or disturbed —each finer sensation might have been blunted, all better feelings destroyed, by the lengthened operation of wretchedness; and the protracted indulgence of grief and sorrow might have rendered the heart callous or withered, and unfit for the reception of its ancient and more genial inmates.

While she thus ruminated in silence, the colonel entered with a copy of the convict's declaration, attested by the formula necessary to establish its authenticity.—"What measures do you propose to adopt?" she demanded of her husband.

"Everard must be put in possession of this document without delay," he replied.

"Certainly; no time should be lost in writing."

"I would fear to risk the conveyance of what is so important to his peace, by the ordinary means of transport."

"But there is no remedy: you would find no person disposed, under the actual circumstances of the Continent, to undertake the charge."

"I have thought seriously on the subject; the danger of travelling is now less than it has long been—continual communication exists between the allied powers, and

and it would not be difficult to reach Switzerland. I propose to be the bearer myself of these papers to Everard: it may not be impossible, by some exertion of interest, to accompany a foreign messenger; and when I consider the consequence attending the early consignment of this to my poor friend, and the fatal result which might arrive from its loss, I cannot hesitate in undertaking the journey."

"But the season of the year," faintly urged Mrs. Montrose, in answer to this unexpected and to her, alarming proposition.

"The season has nothing terrific in it for me, my love; I have been long accustomed to real hardships, while those attached to travelling through France are now in a great degree imaginary.—Two months' absence will be the utmost required by my mission, as I shall not delay my return one moment beyond what is imperatively necessary."

With difficulty Mrs. Montrose acceded to the proposition and wishes of her husband, in giving her consent to his departure, and he immediately proceeded to ascertain the practicability of his project. He was fortunate enough to learn that dispatches were to be forwarded in a couple of days by an officer, who, after visiting the Austrian head quarters, had orders to continue his route to Genoa. The state of public affairs rendered it difficult to procure passports for the purpose; but after employing the interest of his friends, the colonel found himself on the succeeding day furnished with all the requisites demanded to complete his object. If any additional inducement had been necessary to excite his zeal, it would have been afforded by the announcement of the death of Thomas lord Bridgenorth, without issue, and the information that the title and estate had devolved upon his brother Henry.

Henry. The obituary of the day was not confined to the noble and the proud, as it also recorded, in all its horrific detail, the execution of Elizabeth Edwards, which had terminated the terror, remorse, and despair, which had accumulated on her last hour, and sent her to that Great Assize before which "no secret of the heart is hid."

His preparations being completed, the colonel took an affectionate leave of his amiable partner, and the pain of separation was only relieved by the consciousness that it was caused by the exercise of the most sacred duty the ties of friendship could impose.

The journey through France was attended with fewer obstacles than could have been anticipated; but some delays arose in the difficulty of procuring horses, the demand for which for military ser-

vice had rendered it necessary to arrest from time to time the progress of the traveller. The frontier was at length attained, and the cold and perilous passage of the Jura surmounted; while in his descent, the residence of his friend in the plain beneath was pointed out to him by his conductor.

As he contemplated the isolated mansion of Everard, and the bleak and dreary appearance of the surrounding country, and reflected on the circumstances which had driven him from his home and hopes, to become, for years, a lonely exile in a foreign land, he was unable to appreciate the extent of that sorrow which had imposed a sacrifice so great; and congratulated himself in not having confided to mercenary hands that which might yet prove an antidote to the poison that preyed upon the sufferer's mind, and a balm to the wounded heart of the unhappy husband.

Having

Having reached the town nearest the chateau of Leaspach, he encountered a messenger returning from Italy to England, who, upon the promise of a considerable recompence, engaged to permit the colonel to accompany him, and to await his visit to his friend; and also agreed, should Mr. Everard be disposed to be their companion, to enable him to participate in the means of transport, and to await his return from the chateau.

The evening had now closed in, but the necessity of losing no time, induced colonel Montrose to brave all the rigours of a winter's night, and of a furious storm, to communicate immediately with his friend; and it was this untimely visit which, at the commencement of our tale, had astonished Julia, and excited her interest and surprise.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

I have eat my way to professional honour some time, sir.
School for Wives, Act III, Scene 6.

The Bankrupt.

THE tumult excited in the breast of Mr. Everard, by the information afforded him by Montrose, may be easier imagined than described; and the conflicting feelings occasioned by the perusal of the history of the comprehensive wrongs of her whose image had incessantly occupied his thoughts, at first seemed to threaten his reason, while, as the unmerited and congregated sufferings—the public obloquy and reproach—the early desertion and abandonment—and the actual

actual mystery attending her on whom his affections were yet centred, presented themselves in dreadful retrospect to his mind, he yielded to momentary despair, which the presence of mind and affectionate exertions of colonel Montrose could alone have averted. Anxiously did he endeavour to turn the current of his ideas, and direct his view from the past to the future—from the contemplation of scenes of darkness and of horror, to the daystar which had surmounted the horizon, and which promised to direct his path to peace and happiness.

The effect desired by the colonel was soon produced; "Hope sprang exulting on triumphant wing," and chased the clouds which had gathered around. The idea of repairing the shattered edifice of life's comfort once admitted, was eagerly cherished by the husband; and

ere

ere the termination of the colonel's visit, he had resolved to return with his friend to his native land, and to hasten in discovering the retreat of his injured partner. He deemed it prudent not to acquaint his daughter with the tidings he had received, until his proposed research had either been crowned with success, or terminated by a failure in its object; and as the supposed shame of her hapless parent had been a secret to her, it became less necessary to communicate prematurely the announcement of her innocence. The revived hopes of the husband might yet be blighted in their bud; and, with the concurrence of the colonel, he deemed it proper to keep her for the present in that ignorance in which she had hitherto lived upon the subject of her mother's fate.

The journey was completed, with a degree of rapidity suited to the wishes of

of him whom we must now style lord Bridgenorth, whose first care was to verify the statement of Edwards by that of her guilty accomplices—a measure rendered less difficult by the doom that directed the future exercise of their ingenuity on the fertile shores of New South Wales, and rendered the secrecy of their transactions no longer necessary to their safety.

The next step was to seek the merchant, who had, during his absence from England, received the income allotted to the maintenance of Mrs. Everard, and who had annually conveyed to Mrs. Montrose the intelligence of the continued existence of her unfortunate friend, without naming the place of her retreat.

Mr. Reymond, the person in question, had been long established in the city, where his continental connexions

ions and influence had enabled him, during the period of the severest restrictions upon intercourse, to preserve a correspondence with the Continent, which motives of interest induced the rival powers of France and England not wholly to suppress; while it was generally believed, that his fortunes were intimately linked with those of the chief, who now seemed to totter to his fall; and mercantile jealousy had long whispered its forebodings that the destruction of that power would involve vitally the wealth and reputation of the house of Reymond.

On his arrival in Broad-street, lord Bridgenorth was surprised at the death-like silence which seemed to prevail at the counting-house; and it was not until after several appeals to the knocker, that the door was opened by an aged female, who sullenly demanded his business.

ness. To his expressed desire of seeing Mr. Reymond, she answered, by conducting him, in silence, up a flight of stairs, and opening a door, indicated, by a sign, that he should enter, and then retired.

The chamber was darkened, and it was with some difficulty that he recognized the figure of a man, whose face was covered by his hands, as he leant upon a table, so lost in meditation as to be unconscious of the presence of another. A deep groan was succeeded by a hasty and convulsive movement, which enabled him to perceive his visitor.

Having announced his object, while the person he addressed seemed overcome by the deepest sorrow, he waited some time his reply.

"Alas, sir!" he at length said, "the gentleman

gentleman you seek is, unfortunately, no more. On arriving here recently from the Continent, the parental greeting I had anticipated was supplied by the fatal intelligence that he had perished by his own hands—that sudden and unexpected pecuniary embarrassments had driven him to an act of desperation, which had at once proved fatal to his life and professional honour. Deranged in mind as in circumstances, in a moment of frenzy he committed to the flames documents and papers of the greatest import; and I find myself fatherless, and a stranger, without home or friends, the object of suspicion, invective, and reproach."

Tears burst from the eyes of Mr. Reymond, as he concluded his statement; and lord Bridgenorth, anxious as he was on the point he sought, and affected by the new obstacle thrown in the way of his

his pursuit, sympathized with the feelings of the unhappy stranger, and strove to alleviate their anguish.

"Perhaps," at length continued Mr. Reymond, "his books may afford the information you require, and I will conduct you to the counting-house, where they are deposited."

On entering the now deserted office, they found it only occupied by a man of sinister appearance, who stated himself to be a messenger to the commissioners of bankruptcy, and decidedly refused permission to have the books searched. Lord Bridgenorth tried the influence of gold upon his opponent, who accepted the offer, without hesitation, still declining, but more civilly, to allow the search.

"Why, as to that ere, it's quite unpossible,

possible, your honour, as my orders are purrumpterry; for you see, your honour, this here is an aukard bit of an affair, seeing as how the mounseer, who has gave the go-by to his creditors, was a friend of Nap's, and had some odd sort of dealings with the French; so as how, when his friends were obliged to turn tail like, he began to smell a rat, and thought it high time to burn all his papers, for fear of the secret being known. So you see, sir, counsellor Causton, the first commissioner, says as how there was a treasonable correspondence like, and so wont let any thing be moved, until he has seen the secretary of state upon the matter. But howsumever, your honour, if you could get the commissioner's order, I would let you rummage the books with all the pleasure in life."

Too much interested not to attempt the

the removal of this obstacle, lord Bridgenorth took the direction of Mr. Causton; and bidding farewell to Mr. Reymond, proceeded immediately to Lincoln's Inn.

The man of law, Geoffry Causton, esquire, had, by dint of exactitude in keeping terms, and eating commons, attained the honours of the bar, contemporarily with the late lord high chancellor, the earl of Eldon; but from the point where they had thus accidentally met, they ever afterwards diverged; for while one of the initiated had gradually risen to the highest grade of his profession, the other had lost even the negative dignity accorded to his rank; and after having successively floundered through every branch of the law, found himself without name, and without clients, briefless and moneyless, until the humanity of his noble and early colleague

revived

revived in his own idea the opinion of his merits, by nominating him a commissioner of bankrupts, the profits of which office had opportunely enabled him to pay his clerk, his laundress, and his chambers. The boon thus charitably accorded to the poverty of the barrister was, by the tortuous persuasions of self-love, attributed by him to his merit; and often, as he heard the two-pound bank-note crumple gratefully in one hand, as he was required to put his name to a provisional assignment with the other, he could not restrain a sigh, at the partiality of fortune, and the blindness of the age, which had left him to register units to his credit, while hundreds were elsewhere recorded; and with equal modesty and sagacity would he at his club define the errors of judgment pronounced by the highest authority, and dwell with complacency, to some smirking solicitor, on the terms he would have adopted on the same occasion.

If

If he had not succeeded in his professional career to the extent of his hopes, no imputation could be cast upon his want of industry or zeal, as, for years, he had essayed the tribunal of the Old Bailey, where, for some time, he was flattered by casual gleanings of a petty larceny nature, until his exertions proved so much more hostile to his accused clients, than even those of the officers of the crown, that he at length found his services rejected, except by some too poor or ignorant to decline them. Unfortunate as he (or rather his clients) proved in the result of his endeavours, Geoffry possessed that comfortable assurance which is never abashed; and to impose upon the public, or avert its sneer or raillery, as well as the reproaches of those whose patronage he had assumed, he invariably, on hearing the sentence of the court, used, with an arch wink, to declare—

" 'Tis well it is no worse," until his favourite expression had become so habitual, that, upon one occasion, on re-entering the court, and being informed that during his absence sentence of death had been pronounced on his client, he replied, by his usual phrase—" 'Tis well it is no worse!" to the astonishment of the court and audience. But another event in his professional career at once determined its pursuit, by mistaking, amongst several prisoners, the party he had been chosen to defend, and in the only successful appeal he had ever made, saving an accomplice, by hanging his own client. The case of " Muggins against Muggins," one of those ever-green causes of chancery which had outlived its original parties, and the resources of their successors, became a fee-less opportunity to Geoffry of exhibiting his talents before the venerable chancellor himself. His high aspirations

combated

combated the fatal influence of successive terms, which returned unattended by the pleasurable refreshers that should have been their companions; and their space was occupied by the preparation of an oration, in which all that was sound in doctrine, or profound in argument, was proposed to be comprehended. But vain are the hopes of man, futile his propositions! The unnatural frost which congealed the words of Munchausen beneath the pole, was ineffective, in comparison with the rigidity of tongue which possessed the unfortunate barrister, as he rose to give utterance to his speech, and which the compassion of his colleagues, or the kind interference of the judge, failed to abate, and which ended in continued "hems," and "my luds," until discomfited and abashed, he hastily fled the court, never to reappear. But if the oration was lost to the court, it survived to the use

of Geoffry; and like some members of parliament, he in future supplied what he ought to say, by what he had once intended to pronounce; and "Muggins against Muggins" was afterwards drawn in, head and shoulders, on every occasion, and was made applicable to all persons, and every shade of circumstance.

"Sorry I cannot grant your request, mister," he observed to lord Bridgenorth; "but second Elizabeth treats bankrupts as criminals; and *in criminalibus*, as I stated to my lord chancellor, in 'Muggins and Muggins,' we cannot be too cautious. Then there is leze majesty in the case probably; and possibly attaint may follow—that is to say, if the treason, as I observed, in 'Muggins and Muggins—You have heard of that case, I presume?"

"Not at all," replied his lordship; "and I do not presume it can have any reference

reference to the request I have been induced to make. My motives have been already explained, and their pressing urgency would plead, I trust, in favour of a solicitation wholly unconnected with the mercantile or political conduct of monsieur Reymond."

"Of that I am the best judge, mister!" retorted angrily the arrogant counsellor; "*Judex solus* am I—*et meo periculo*, I refuse, as I said to my lord chancellor, in Muggins and Muggins; and were I to lend myself to criminal views—I, Geoffry Causton! what would his lordship say? what the bar? what the solicitors? what my clients? You know not what you ask, mister—your motives may be honest."

"I would advise you, sir, not to impute to them an opposite tendency," observed lord Bridgenorth, with a tone of coolness, decision, and contempt, which for a moment embarrassed the barrister,

without, however, mitigating his choler.

"In fine, sir," he continued, "I cannot accede to your demand. After the examination of his son, who, I understand, is arrived in London, if the assignees consent to your request, I shall offer no opposition, for it is their act, as I said in Muggins and Muggins. You may, nevertheless, leave me your address, in that event, mister."

"There, sir," said lord Bridgenorth, rising to leave the room, and placing his card on the table; "and I hope they will be more sensible to the real nature of my solicitations than you have been."

"Bless my heart! dear! dear!" ejaculated Geoffry, on perusing the card; "quite shocked, my lord—infinitely ashamed — most happy — excessively grieved. May I pray your lordship to resume your seat for a moment?—Here, Jenkins.—My clerk, my lord——Paper, Jenkins, quick.—Ask a thousand

sand pardons, my lord. An order to examine books and papers of defunct Reymond, a bankrupt, if I understood right, my lord? Most happy, I am sure, my lord. Jenkins shall accompany your lordship, to prevent obstacles. Hem—hem—To Jeremy Gripe, our messenger—Hem—May I ask your lordship's Christian name?——Extremely obliged, my lord.—Permit the right honourable Henry lord Bridgenorth—Hem—hem—hem—Geoffry Causton, commissioner.—Jenkins, be ready to wait upon his lordship.—I have the honour, my lord, to present you the order. Shall call upon the assignees myself this afternoon, to make further inquiry; possibly may be permitted to pay my respects to your lordship. Fear I shall be detained late; would not wish to intrude upon your lordship unseasonably—your lordship's dinner-hour?"

The talismanic influence of title had operated, with the effect of quicksilver, not only on the tongue, but the entire person, of Geoffry; and while lord Bridgenorth, in coolly declining his proffered officiousness, and thanking him for the order, left the room, the little barrister's head and shoulders were in quick alternate elevation and depression, until his last and most respectful bow, at the head of the staircase, was made with so little regard to the centre of gravity, that his form shot precipitately downwards, and might have caused him to rue his politeness, had not the faithful Jenkins impeded its progression, and restored him to his perpendicular position.

Armed with the "Sesame" of the commissioner, lord Bridgenorth returned to the city, where, by the advice of Jenkins, they first sought the chief clerk of the

the late Mr. Reymond, now discarded from his office, as most probably he would be better enabled to aid them in the search than the son of the deceased, who was almost wholly a stranger to the concern. In his company they reached Broad-street, and every facility was afforded them to attain the object so dear to lord Bridgenorth's heart. A long examination of the general letter-book and ledger was terminated unsuccessfully, as nothing appeared in the name of Mrs. Everard, or to give the slightest clue to her retreat.

"Can you give us any information, Wilmot?" demanded monsieur Reymond, of his father's former assistant.

"I fear not, sir," he replied; "I am aware that remittances were made to a lady of the name you mention, but they were effected by order to your father's agent, and not by bills; and the whole

of that correspondence, as well as the accounts connected with it, were, for political reasons, kept a profound secret from us, and all documents relating to them were destroyed the night previous to his death."

"Have you an idea to which of his correspondents he entrusted the affair?"

"I cannot speak with certainty, but I think it was with the house of Hildburghausen, at Frankfort. If they choose, they may give every necessary information."

"Why, do you anticipate difficulties?"

"Yes, sir; as since the failure of this house, they have refused to answer any of the letters written to them by the creditors here, and fearing to involve themselves in the consequences of the bankruptcy, have announced their intention of not answering any question put to them by those interested in monsieur Reymond's concerns."

Lord

Lord Bridgenorth, deeply affected at this disappointment, was about to retire, when monsieur Reymond requested him to enter an adjoining room.—"I am too sensible, my lord, to the sympathy you manifested this morning towards me, burthened as you were by your own anxiety, not to offer every means in my power to aid you. If my father's correspondents at Frankfort be really in possession of information, I can, through my friends at Paris, procure orders from the French government, on which, the present existence of their establishment, and their entire prosperity, depend, sufficient to oblige them to declare the truth, however from other causes they may be unwilling to develop it. To-morrow morning my letters shall be ready for your lordship; and I confidently trust that our mutual exertions may be crowned with success." Warmly thanking the unfortunate young man,

lord Bridgenorth returned, melancholy and discontented, to the house of colonel Montrose.

"I see no reason to despair," observed the latter, on learning the event of the day; "a short period can but elapse ere application will be made for the remittance of funds, and the mystery must then be developed."

"True," replied lord Bridgenorth; "but yet months may intervene: that lengthened interval would drive me to madness. A moment must not be unnecessarily lost. What wrongs have I not to expiate!—what accumulated injuries to repair!—what manifold sufferings to redress, if it be not too late, towards one who was all truth, and love, and innocence! Would that the memory of the past seared not my brain, as now I feel it; but when the dreadful retrospect returns of all she has so long endured—her loved, her cherished infant,

fant, torn from the fond embrace of the parent who doted on her, and the warm feelings of a mother's breast turned from their genial course, no more excited by her child's caress, but broken by the cruel bar of separation from the being whom she had borne and loved. Then for myself, I dare not think of it."

"You must not yield thus to despondency," interrupted the colonel, "but rather bless the chance which has no longer left the evil irremediable—rather be grateful to that high Power, which, ere it was too late, withdrew the veil that has so long obscured the truth, and left you yet the means of happiness."

"My resolution is taken," exclaimed lord Bridgenorth; "I cannot rest until each channel opened to me be explored. I shall set off instantly for the Continent; the promise afforded me by Reymond, of influencing the disclosure of his German correspondents—the semblance

blance of their having been the intermediary agents between his father and my poor Jane, awakes hope within me, and my departure must not be delayed. From Frankfort my search must be continued; or if it be the will of Providence that there my short-lived expectation shall expire, I shall proceed to Switzerland, and give the remnant of my life to grief, to anguish, and remorse. My child, my beloved Julia, must not then be doomed to share my wretched solitude, nor her youth sacrificed to her father's sorrows. Into your hands I shall then consign her, and all my prayer shall be, that she may not suffer by her father's errors, and that the remembrance of her parent's fate may not invade her peace."

"We will accompany you to Paris, Bridgenorth," observed the colonel; "thence we shall proceed to Switzerland, where we shall, in all events, undoubtedly

doubtedly arrive before you. Should your expectations be not quite fulfilled, our presence may be useful; but if success should crown your efforts, we shall be participators in the general joy, and help to celebrate the return of comfort to those we love, in witnessing the restoration of your connubial felicity."

Notwithstanding the many motives for lord Bridgenorth's stay in England, for a short period at the least, originating in the novel attainment of property and title, his preparations, and those of his friends, were soon effected, and in a few days they were on their way to Paris.

Leaving the delighted colonel at Paris, enraptured by the sight of the various soldiery which then occupied that capital, and gazing with admiration on the green-clad Russian, the blue Prussian,

sian, and the white uniform of Austrian troops, while all his martinet ideas, and principles of discipline, were shocked by the independant manœuvres of the blanketted Cossack, lord Bridgenorth proceeded on his route to Frankfort, his mind distracted by anxiety and doubt, alternately yielding to the joyful promises of hope, or admitting ideas of melancholy or despair.

On his arrival he proceeded to the counting-house of Messrs. Hildburghausen, where, on his mentioning the name of Reymond, the principal of the firm eagerly interrupted his discourse.

"Mine Gott, mynheer, I am ver sorry! you be von of dem creditors of Gustaf Reymond, and have taken this terrible voyage, to see vat you can squeeze out of the purse of Hertzog Hildburghausen; but you may just trot about for your

your pains. No effects, mynheer; mine Gott, dat dese English are ver foolish peoples."

"You are wholly mistaken as to my object," replied lord Bridgenorth; "allow me to undeceive you. I have had no pecuniary concerns with the house of Reymond; but my only motive for intruding upon you is to ascertain the residence of a person——"

"Ah, ah!" again interrupted the sensitive merchant, "you are at them deivels of politics! but de fish vont bite, mynheer: know noting, no more nor a shild, of parsons or residences. Accounts of Gustaf Reymond shew us to be creditors; and dat is a bit more as we likes to know; so, mynheer, take the advice of von ver goot friend—shove'em your carcase in the inside of a diligence, or, as the weather is warmish, you may take the coupé; and ven you gets back to London, make a big book of travels, and

and tell all about Frankfort you see; and in the end you may lose nothing at all, mynheer; and just say a vord or two about the house of Hildburghausen, in a little note, at the foot of de leafs."

"But permit me, Mr. Hildburghausen——"

"Shall not do no sitch thing; the more little we speak, the more less ve fibs; so am ver sorry, mynheer, to bid you farewell, ver sorry indeed; 'tis time of change, mynheer. Don't forget the great pig book, vid de copperplates, and de shapters, and de notes."

"Stop, sir," cried lord Bridgenorth, as the merchant was in the act of departing; "if you are determined to refuse me a hearing, on a point which can in nowise compromise you, and is to me of the highest moment, I shall certainly have to regret some brief delay; but I have letters from Paris, which may be more effectual than my present appeal to

to you; and in presenting them to the authorities to whom they are addressed, you will alone be responsible for any ulterior and injurious consequences which, unconnected with my inquiry, may arise from them."

"Mine Gott!" said the merchant, pausing, and turning pale, "dat dese English are peoples as vont hear reason —not at all; but as flies in a passion, and bubbles as sauer krout. Dear, dear!" he exclaimed, wiping the sudden perspiration, which had involuntarily covered his forehead, "von would think as how I had been unshivil, and wouldn't answer, mynheer, ven it is not true—not at all. Mine Gott! but you haven't told me vat it is as you vants, mynheer; so sit yourself down, and I'll order some schnaps, and tell me all your business; but it was ver foolish to bring them nasty letters, ver foolish indeed."

As lord Bridgenorth recapitulated the object

object of his visit, the cloud which hung upon the merchant's brow gradually dispersed; and when he had concluded, he seized his visitor's hand, with all the eager joy which a sense of danger, suddenly and unexpectedly averted, is calculated to excite.

"Dere is none objection in de vorld, mine tear, none at all, although ve did promise our poor friend Gustaf to keep vat you vants to know a close secret; but, mine Gott, take a letal morsel of advice, and burn dem dare foolish letters, and you shall soon be satisfied, only have a little bit of patience, as mine partner, Unterspraken, has got the key of de bureau of de private correspondence, and he knows more better as I all about what you ax; and he is gone into the country, but will be back in the evening; so, mynheer, put down dat ere lady's name on dis here scrap of paper, and

and when Unterspraken comes back, I will vait upon you mine own self, mynheer."

Obliged to be satisfied with this answer, lord Bridgenorth left his address, determined, in the event of further equivocation, to resort to those means, the very mention of which had had an effect so imposing upon the decision of the merchant.

He had just finished his solitary dinner, when Mr. Hertzog Hildburghausen entered his room, with an air of the most profound respect.—"Your humbles servant, mein lor; ver sorry to make you wait, but Unterspraken has only just got home, and he has charged me vid dese papers for you, mein lor; but pray, mein lor, you will put dem ver foolish letters in dat stove dare, mein lor—if you please, mein lor."

They

"They are here; but first give me what I demanded, and fear not but you shall have possession of them."

Lord Bridgenorth hastily perused the paper furnished him by the merchant, and immediately rang the bell, with a degree of violence that startled his visitor, and procured the instant attendance of the landlord.—"Send up my valet. Post horses without the least delay."

"Whither, my lord?"

"Towards Cologne; I must leave Frankfort instantly."

His valet entering, he gave him directions for their prompt departure; which ended, his thoughts returned towards the merchant, whom, to his surprise, he found had in the interim quitted the house, first possessing himself, in execution of the compact, of the letters, in which he was so materially interested;

terested; and in a few minutes, lord Bridgenorth was beyond the walls of Frankfort.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

The viewless lingerer here, at evening sees,
From rock-hewn steps, the sail between the trees,
Or stops, the solemn mountain shades to view,
Stretch'd o'er the pictur'd mirror broad and blue.

WORDSWORTH.

The Lake.

LEAVING lord Bridgenorth to pursue his researches, we shall renew the history of his unhappy daughter, on leaving the chateau of the marchese Graziani, in the mountains of Savoy. Deprived, by the discovery of their intended flight, of the aid of Ursule, and reflecting, with mingled emotions of horror and pity, on the early crimes, and tardy repentance of that miserable woman, she pursued

pursued her way in silence, wrapped in a mantle, to shield her from the cold air of a November morning. The first dawn of day had appeared as they passed under the huge and ponderous archway of the building; but a dense mist had shrouded the surface of the Leman, and obscured the lower country from view. Her conductors, Roderigo and Pietro, seemed influenced by the gloom and silence which prevailed, and proceeded tacitly and slowly on their course, amidst the defiles of the mountains; and by their direction, Julia could ascertain that they were descending towards the Valais. The mule which Julia rode seemed accustomed to the difficult and dangerous road they had entered upon, which at first had created in her considerable alarm; but the surefootedness of the animal, and his natural intelligence and caution, soon considerably allayed her fears. The sun at length rose

brightly, and dispelled, in a great degree, the heavy mists which prevailed, and enabled her to ascertain more distinctly the aspect of the country, which, although wild, savage, and uninhabited, was yet interesting and imposing.

"Did Giacomo inform you why his eccellenza was prevented coming himself to the castello, as he proposed?" demanded Pietro of his companion.

"He mentioned the reason," replied Roderigo, "but I was occupied in a business which made me forget all else. Poor Marco! I did not think these old arms were destined to bear him to his grave, like a dog too, without book, bell, or candle: no matter, masses shall yet be sung for him, for he has need of them."

"Come, come, no whimpering, Roderigo," interrupted Pietro: "as for the santa Chiesa, I don't value much what she

she can do for us; as for Marco, he has met the chance of war, and perhaps he's not worse off than some of us may soon be."

"The chance of war," muttered Roderigo—"the best have the luck of it; as for you, you are too careful of your worthless carcase, to encounter it willingly; however, I guess the game is nearly up."

"How so, man?—speak?" said Pietro, anxiously.

"I could not attend to all Giacomo said," replied his companion, "but I remember that his eccellenza told him, he was afraid the bloodhounds were on the scent—something about his having been betrayed, and that the Austrians—" here his words were uttered so low, that Julia could not distinguish them; but they had an apparent effect upon the nerves of Pietro, who turned pale and stammered forth—

"To avoid the towns, ha! that is the reason, instead of taking the great road by the lake, we are poking our way by these confounded paths; diavolo, I have half a mind to let his eccellenza——"

"Silence, poltroon," thundered forth Roderigo; "I shall perform my engagement, and shall take care you do the like; afterwards, I shall pursue my own course, and you may go to the devil in any direction you think proper."

Here the conversation ended, and was not renewed until after the lapse of some hours, they commenced their last descent to the Valais, when Pietro observed—"Then you do not intend to enter Martigni, Roderigo?"

"No," was the reply; "Giacomo has prepared every thing; Martigni is far to the left; but it is better to rest here, ere we gain the road."

They descended from their horses, and

and assisted Julia to alight at the entrance of a diminutive tower, built probably for the temporary habitation of some mountain peasant, when forced, by the severity of the winter, to seek shelter in the plains. Roderigo then produced refreshments, of which Julia partook; for her hopes and courage had in some degree revived, in learning that she was yet at a distance from her infamous persecutor; and she indulged the idea of yet effecting her escape, although the means could only be afforded by accident. After their meal was finished, they descended on foot, leaving the animals in the tower, and soon reached the high road, where a carriage was in waiting for them. Into this she was obliged to enter, attended by Pietro; while Roderigo mounted as postillion, and a peasant who had hitherto guarded the vehicle, was directed to return with the horses to the chateau. The rate at

which they proceeded during the day was so rapid, that as the evening closed in, they found themselves at the foot of the last of those enormous barriers which nature has placed between Switzerland and Italy.

They had frequently changed horses, but always at some retired and uninhabited spot; and in passing through the towns which were in their passage, Pietro had taken effectual precautions to prevent his companion from using any exertion calculated to excite attention or arrest their progress. Stopping at a small and wretched cottage, inhabited by a family of those miserable creatures which abound in the Valais, whose personal deformity is only equalled by their mental imbecility, she was prevailed upon again to take refreshment and repose for some hours, on a low and miserable bed, as Roderigo announced his intention

tention of commencing the ascent of the Simplon, as soon as the moon had risen.

At ten in the evening they accordingly left the cottage; and Julia was pleased to find that she would be alone in the carriage during the night, as Pietro proceeded separately on horseback. Little disposed to sleep, she endeavoured, from time to time, to descry the romantic scenery which the various windings of that magnificent road present. But the moonlight was unequal to their display; and the feeble delineation afforded of that mighty construction was like the almost eclipsed glory of its founder, at times wholly obscured, or partially and faintly seen.

Whilst myriads of human beings had been sacrificed to the maintenance of his power — while hosts of brave and

generous warriors had lavishly shed their blood to uphold him in his "pride of place"—while with chivalrous enthusiasm and fanatic zeal, nations had thronged around his imperial banner, he was now humbled, helpless, and alone.—"And perhaps," thought Julia, "his future fate may leave him, like this proud relic of his strength, the admiration of the passing pilgrim, who views him, remote and distant from the haunts of men, in silence and obscurity, encircled by terror, barrenness, and desolation."

As the morning dawned, she first beheld the plains of Italy; and the tears flowed freely, as she reflected that she was now for the first time separated from the land which contained all that was dear to her—from which she had been severed by ruffian violence and brutal force. But her affliction was less caused by the consciousness of her own unmerited

unmerited injuries, than by the idea of the sufferings of her friends. — "For in the last extremity of ill," thought Julia, "I shall look for the interposition of Providence in favour of innocence. Never shall I resign my confidence in the protection of the Almighty; and should his decree be death, I shall bless my doom, if my life be the necessary sacrifice to my honour."

Proceeding onwards through the Piedmontese territory, they arrived at noon at the Lago Maggiore; and passing along its borders, the carriage halted between the towns of Fariolo and Baveno; and on her alighting, she observed a boat prepared for her reception ready to depart, on entering which she was received by the author of her wrongs and sufferings, the marchese Graziani.

Even at the sight of the hateful ob-

ject which offered itself to her view, her firmness failed her not; but his appearance rather excited her indignation, horror, and contempt. Placing her by force in the boat, he took his seat beside her, and endeavoured, by every artifice, to induce her to converse with him—an attempt in which he failed to succeed, as the words of Julia only threatened him with the vengeance of her friends, or expressed her abhorrence and detestation of his conduct.

While the boatmen were making preparations for their departure, it was, however, evident that some cause of apprehension, unconnected with Julia, existed, as his manner was hurried, and he laboured under excessive agitation, as he entreated the men to leave the shore without delay.

Having gained some distance, the curtains

curtains of the awning were withdrawn; and Julia, for the first time, viewed that beautiful lake, of which she had often heard her father speak with enthusiasm, and which, under any other circumstances, would have caused her wonder and delight. As she had reason to suppose, from the conversation of the marchese, that their journey would be soon at an end, she looked anxiously around, in the hopes of discovering some bark, resolved to appeal for aid and assistance to the first they might encounter in their course; but far as her view could extend over the placid surface of the lake, no object met her sight, to encourage the idea she had entertained. At a distance she beheld the Isola Madre, verdant from its rich and numerous orange groves; and as they approached the Isola dei Pescatori, she observed its inhabitants busily occupied in repairing the nets which ensured to them a humble competence.

The rowers, who had hitherto indefatigably plied their oars, were permitted by the marchese to relax their efforts, after they had passed this place; and they gently pursued their course towards the Isola Bella, the principal of the Borromean islands, and the property of the chief of that noble and once powerful family.

Julia could not help contemplating with admiration the extensive and magnificent palace erected upon it, and the superb gardens, raised, like those of ancient Babylon, on terraces, and loaded with fruit trees of the rarest and most luxuriant description. Here saint Charles, of Borromeo, the patron of Milan, passed the greater part of his useful and pious life; and the chamber in which he lived and studied is still preserved, in the state in which he left it, remarkable only for its simplicity, and

and having been the retreat of that noble and virtuous cardinal. As they drew near the walls of the palace, the marchese pointed out to her attention the magnificent arches, constructed for the purpose of admitting boats into the interior of the lower stage of the building, the admirable disposition of the apartments of which he was in the act of describing, when a boat suddenly emerged from it, with a degree of velocity which prevented the rowers from changing its direction, in sufficient time to avoid encountering that which contained Julia, or enabling the marchese to give directions for his own to shun its approach.

The shock of the encounter was so violent, as to dislodge the men of each from their seats, and throw them into the greatest confusion; while the marchese hastened to lower the curtains of the awning, at the same time ordering, with threats and fury, his people to hasten

ten their progress. Julia, in the interval, had observed a gentleman rise to apologize for the accident of which he had been unwillingly the occasion; and ere the marchese succeeded in preventing, she implored his assistance with piercing cries.

"Onwards!" exclaimed the marchese, violently, "onwards! and if we but make head against the boat, you shall be amply rewarded."

His orders were instantly complied with, and the boat shot forwards with extraordinary speed, while the men used every effort, by straining at the oar, to outstrip the stranger; but the closed curtains prevented Julia ascertaining whether the other bark was in pursuit of them or not.

"Where are they now?" after a few minutes demanded the marchese.

"In

"In chace of us, eccellenza!" exclaimed Pietro, who steered the bark; "they are three less in number than we, but they are fast gaining the distance they at first lost; they must be pescatori, signore, or they never could pull at that rate. If San Carlo don't help us, they will soon near us."

"Diavolo!" shouted the marchese; "give me my pistols, Roderigo. What boat is it, Pietro?"

"A Baveno barge, eccellenza, used by travellers to the Isola Bella, and they have one on board now, for he is not an Italian; he is standing up in the stern, encouraging his men; but, Cospetto di Bacco, he has left the rudder, and taken an oar himself. On, comrades, on," continued Pietro to the crew; "by San Michele, he knows how to feather an oar, and is worth two of you. They are not now six boat lengths off, and nothing can hinder them reaching us."

"Be

"Be ready, Roderigo!" exclaimed the marchese, seizing at the same time a pistol, while the inferior villain prepared to assist his employer with a sword which he grasped.

Julia had now contrived to liberate one of her arms from the mantle which the marchese had thrown over her, and extending it beyond the curtain, waved her handkerchief in the direction of her unexpected ally, at the same time shrieking loudly for the help which seemed near at hand.

"Halt directly! Lie upon your oars, or proceed at your peril!" exclaimed the stranger, in broken Italian.

"*Par dio! eccellenza,* it is an Inglese," observed Pietro; "he is armed, and prepares to fire."

"*Giesu Maria,* stop the boat, figli mia!" exclaimed at the same time the affrighted

affrighted valet, whose prominent position rendered him the first proper object of attack; but ere the equipage, who were now thrown into confusion, could comply with his request, the report of a pistol was heard in the rear, and the pander to the villainy of the marchese falling forwards, overthrew the awning in his descent, at the same time impelling his master downwards, and thereby preventing his using the weapon he had prepared to resist the attack; but the accident did not terminate there, for the cocked pistol of the marchese striking against the seat, exploded; and at the same moment a deep groan announced that Roderigo had received its contents in his body.

The crew now desisted from all further exertions, and distrustful of the character of their employer, remained inactive, and seemed not disposed to offer

fer resistance to the stranger, who was alongside of their boat, into which he instantly entered, ere the marchese could place himself in a posture of defence.

Seconded by his domestic, who was also armed, the stranger had no difficulty in ensuring his triumph, which secured, he turned to Julia, and began to address her in Italian; but suddenly ejaculated—"Heavens! can it be possible?—Miss Everard!"

"Save me—oh, save me, major Beauclerc," whom it really was, "save me from a wretch, who has torn me from my friends and home! Heaven has heard my prayer, and sent you to my relief."

"Fear not, madam," he answered, as he took her in his arms, and placed her in his own boat; "you are out of danger. I will sacrifice my life for you, if it be necessary," he said, as he placed her in

in safety. "Remain in the boat, Thomas, and let no one approach the lady."

The marchese had in the mean time gained his feet, and as the major returned, attempted to fire his second pistol; but the shock of his fall had dislodged the priming, so that his effort was ineffectual; but that of the major's arm was more successful, as the Italian in a moment lay prostrate in the boat.

"Bind your master instantly, scoundrel!" he commanded the trembling Pietro, who had suddenly revived, to the astonishment of his companions, who had believed him dead, but whom, in fact, the report of the first pistol had so greatly alarmed, that he had fallen from his seat; and once down, deemed it politic to retain his recumbent posture, to avoid further and more serious consequences.

"*Con*

"*Con piacere,*" answered the valet, as he readily obeyed the command he had received, in tying his prostrate employer with cords, excusing himself to his *eccellenza* from time to time for the "*grandissima liberta*" he took with his honourable person.

This accomplished, the major directed one of the boatmen to do the same favour to the valet, which was quickly effected; while he examined the state of the wounded Roderigo, whose injury was decidedly mortal, and who was now in the agonies of death.

"Holy Virgin," gasped forth the dying wretch, "spare me yet one moment! Forgive me, oh forgive me! To die thus! and by his hand! But it is just!" With almost supernatural exertion he sprang upon his feet, while his face, darkened by the convulsion which had seized

seized him, presented an appearance sufficient to strike terror in the stoutest heart, and throwing a glazed and furious look around, shouted—"Where is he?—the murderer!—assassin! Let me at least but die revenged! Revenge, revenge for me—Marco, the signora Teresa! Quick!—Help me forwards!"

While he thus spoke, his hand was engaged in the *fascia*, or sash, which was tied around his waist, from which he strove to draw a dagger; but his efforts were in vain—the energy that actuated him was momentary, and he fell dead without a groan.

"Pull to Baveno," said the major to his own men, "while I take the command of this boat; and whoever dares resist my orders, shall do it at his peril! On to Baveno."

"We shall obey you, signore, never fear,"

fear," answered one of the marchese's boatmen; "we have had a bad cargo on board; but we had no hand in this business, *illustrissimo*; had we known what that old diavolo was about, we should not have embarked in it."

This assurance was repeated by the others, as they readily turned the prow of the boat in a direction opposite to that which they had hitherto pursued.

The major, perceiving that all danger of resistance was ended, again assured Julia of her safety, and his resolution to defend her.

Here he was interrupted by the marchese, who, in a supplicating tone, urged him not to proceed to Baveno, but intreated him to put him on shore in some other place.

"I shall

"I shall not change my purpose, nor retract my orders, sir," coldly answered the major. "Your intended crime is of the blackest die, and you must take the consequences."

"No, no, *illustrissimo*," observed the spokesman of the crew, "don't let his *eccellenza* escape; we are simple *paesani*, who have long suffered by his tyranny and crimes. *Par dio!* my heart misgave me, when I found that the *signore* who pursued us was from *Inghilterra;* for on the water, they say, they are invincible; and it is always more prudent to cry *peccavi*, than to wrestle with them."

"Fear not, my lad," said major Beauclerc; "when we reach Baveno, I shall take care that your time and labour shall be recompensed."

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of op'ning flowers, unsully'd beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence, she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.

Tamerlane, Act I. Scene 1.

The Return.

LANDING at the small but beautiful town of Baveno, the first care of major Beauclerc was to ensure Julia from further danger. Conveying her to the inn, he strongly recommended the greatest attention to the master of the house; and having left his servant to guard her, he returned to the boats, to dispose of the marchese and his follower. Here he found

found an Austrian dragoon, who had been stationed at the inn, and was attracted by the report of the arrival of prisoners, giving directions for their disposal.

Major Beauclerc, deeming his interference officious and unauthorized, was about to order him to withdraw; but the soldier perceiving his intention, explained the reason of his taking part in the affair.—"The signore marchese di Graziani must proceed to Milan, sir," he said, addressing himself to the major—"if you desire to see my orders, I shall exhibit them; but they are positive, and must be executed."

"But what is his offence, my friend?" demanded the major.

"That for which I am directed to secure him, sir, is for practices against the state, in being connected with a band of conspirators to subvert the existing

government. His papers have been seized during his absence, and sufficient proofs are afforded by them of his guilt. His intention was to fly the country, as soon as some persons he expected should reach him; and had you not intercepted him, his arrest was certain, as we had all necessary indications of his movements. They say also, sir, that he has been guilty of the murder of a female relation long since; but the story is imperfectly known, as the proofs which have transpired have been kept a profound secret."

At this moment a carriage, which had been summoned for the purpose, drew up; and the marchese, who had hitherto observed an obstinate and sullen silence, was ordered to enter. He now broke forth into imprecations of the most fearful description, against the power by which his career of crime had been

been suddenly arrested, and maledictions upon major Beauclerc, for having succeeded in saving his victim from his grasp. This scene was soon terminated, by his being borne, with his trusty valet, to the vehicle, which immediately drove rapidly off, in the direction of Sesto Calende. The major now recompensed liberally the men employed in the boats, and gave directions for the interment of the body of the unfortunate Roderigo.

On returning to Julia, he recounted the fate of the marchese, while she, sensible of the providential interposition which had occurred in her behalf, shed tears of joy and gratitude, at the timely and unexpected succour afforded her in the very height of peril. When she reflected on her many sufferings, and on the dark and dreary prospect which, a few hours since, opened to her view,

her heart teemed with emotions of joy and gratitude, and gave to her expressions of obligation towards the major, a force and warmth which was the highest recompence he could desire to receive for his services. She shortly, but energetically, described the scenes she had been obliged to witness, the misery she had endured, and all the horrors of her late situation, and dwelt, in terms so ardent, on the generous intervention of her preserver, that nothing but the restraint, imposed by the delicate and confidential situation he was placed in towards the lovely object of his hopes and solicitude, could prevent him from throwing himself at the feet of the fair and innocent being who addressed him, and giving utterance to that passion which had its birth beneath her own roof, and which absence had only tended to enforce. Affected by the recital of Julia, he almost regretted the chance which

which had prevented his vindicating her wrongs in personal rencounter with the marchese; but the wish was soon repressed, by the consideration of the abject state to which he was now degraded.

In compliance with Julia's request, he stated to her the cause of his opportune appearance, to save her from the danger which had threatened her. On his arrival with dispatches at Genoa, many months previously, he had been ordered to proceed to Palermo, in Sicily, and thence to the island of Malta, with duplicates of those of which he had been the bearer. The delay caused by these missions had induced him to propose returning to England from the latter place by the packet; but ere its arrival, a favourable opportunity offering for Leghorn, he had preferred a continental journey to the monotonous and

tedious passage to his native land by sea. He had subsequently visited Florence, Bologna, and Milan, and remained some time in each city; and was hastening his return, before the advance of winter rendered the Simplon impassable, but could not quit the banks of the Lago Maggiore without inspecting the far-famed beauties of its islands. It was in quitting the Palazzo Borromeo, on the Isola Bella, that his boat, happily, had been placed in contact with that of the marchese, and the cries of a female in distress were sufficient to awake in his breast every generous and humane feeling.—"Often," he continued, "have I deeply regretted the delay which prevented my availing myself of your kind permission to revisit the chateau of Leaspach—often have I remembered, with sentiments of admiration and respect, its inhabitants; and but little could I deem that the obsta-

cles

cles continually opposed to my return were destined to confer on me the happiness of rescuing from danger, her for whom I would readily have sacrificed my existence."

The blushes of Julia supplied the place of words, in testifying the feelings by which she was impressed; and every moment he passed in her presence added a new and stronger link to the tie which bound him to her.

By the promise of a high recompence, the major, during the day, was enabled to procure a respectable female of Baveno to attend Julia on her return to Switzerland; and at an early hour of the ensuing day they departed.

On her return, she was enabled more leisurely to contemplate the sublime scenery of the Val di Vedro, and the

magnificent, but appalling spectacle, presented in ascending the Simplon. The various changes which the windings of the road produced in the prospect, were calculated to astonish and delight her; but when from the Alpine height she first beheld the glorious and extensive picture spread below, and recognized the entrance to the land in which almost all her affections were concentered, she could not refrain from expressing her enthusiastic joy to major Beauclerc, as she leant upon his arm; and his feelings fully corresponded with those of the loved object he supported. With rapture he listened to her voice—with pleasure before unfelt, he gazed upon her form—with admiration and respect he remarked the purity of her mind, and the innocence of her heart; and he only desired, as the highest boon Heaven could bestow on earth, the possession of her affections, and to be selected as her friend,

her

her lover, and her guardian through life.

The honourable principles of her preserver, his manly and generous character, his noble and successful exertions in her defence and aid, served only to confirm the earlier prepossessions of Julia in his favour; and while she deemed that the indulgence she allowed to her sentiments in his behalf was but the rigid measure gratitude required, love asserted his empire over her heart; and ere she was aware of his exclusive dominion, she felt that on him depended the future happiness and comfort of her existence.

The major strove to prolong the delight afforded him by her company, in pointing out to her observation all that was remarkable in their course through the wild and wondrous region which

they traversed—The huge overhanging rocks, which seemed to threaten momentary destruction to all beneath, and which, intercepting the light of day, threw a gloomy and sombre character far around—the lofty mountain pinnacle, which the eye vainly strove to scan, and which rising in desolate and solitary grandeur, bid defiance to human presumption, or the research of man—the distant eagle, cleaving through the upper air his sightless path, to his remote and ice-girt aerie—the frequent cascade, suddenly bursting from its unknown and lofty source, and with thundering sound dashing wide its spray, where it fell with terrific violence beneath, the small and quiet rivulet becoming, within a space the eye might command, a formidable and raging flood, now forming a tremendous fall, and soon lost in the depths below, where its existence was only ascertained by the deep and hollow murmurs

of

of its course, as it pursued its way amid the dark recesses of the rocks. She would again pause to regard with horror the frightful evidences of some mighty avalanche, which, in its path of ruin, had laid prostrate the once proud and vigorous pines, and swept massive rocks from their base, in its destructive passage, making desolation more desolate in the giant track it had pursued. The graceful, but varied form of the Alpine bridges, which sprung from height to height, frequently elevated so far above the waters, which pierced the abyss below, that the eye could not attain them, particularly excited her attention; and she admired the beautiful construction that denoted the refined taste of that distant age, which, even amidst wilds and wildernesses, left a record of its refinement, which even modern science could scarcely hope to equal. The mighty and lengthened galleries, that pierce the

rocky barrier, also attested the enterprizing mind of him, who, after asserting his sway over prostrate Italy, and established on the ruins of Rome itself undisputed rule, dared to struggle for superiority of fame even in that desert spot, and braving the opposing fury of nature itself, succeeded in erecting a monument as proud, and probably as durable, as the more ancient masters of the world could produce.

Ten days had elapsed at the chateau of Leaspach, during which its inhabitants had given themselves up to grief and melancholy, and finally to despair. If the circumstances under which Julia had been torn from her paternal roof could, as they did, excite general dismay, and the most ardent interest in every part of the surrounding country—if in the peasant hut, the tale of her mysterious absence was repeated nightly by the

the humble hearth, and many a sigh bestowed in reflecting on the loss of one who had endeared herself to every rank by her beauty and her virtue, how is it possible to describe that deep, overpowing agony, which tore the bosom of those nearer friends, who had seen her charms unfold themselves beneath their fond and admiring view, and who had zealously and successfully strove to render her mind as faultless as her form, and at the moment when they acknowledged their proudest hopes realized beyond the most flattering anticipation, were doomed to behold the fruit of their labours at once ruthlessly destroyed, and the object of their love and joy become the victim of brutal and lawless violence!

Deeply as he was affected by the event—strange and fearful as were his forebodings, monsieur De Rougemont allowed not his grief to deter him from his

his duty; and calling all the manly firmness of his nature to his aid, he lost not a moment in putting into activity every means calculated to restore Julia to her home, or to ascertain the course pursued by her ruffian enemies. Night and day had the venerable man devoted to gain intelligence of his beloved pupil. Animated continually by new, but delusive hopes, he laboured to recover the child of his friend and of his own affection; but day after day wore away, and he found his cherished expectations futile, until yielding to despair, he regained the spot now deprived of all that rendered it grateful or pleasant. Anxiously was he met at the threshold by the afflicted household, to whom he bore no tidings of comfort or of hope: but there was one who in silence and in grief awaited his return, and whose existence seemed only prolonged by the idea of viewing in him the preserver of all that bound her to the world.

world. That alone had been able to sustain sister Mary, in this dark hour of her distress; and whatever had been her former sorrows—great as had been all other privations (and that they were grave and numerous, could not be doubted), they were apparently endurable, in comparison with the shock she had received—with the last visitation she was fated to undergo. Pale, breathless, speechless, she had not power to rise, as monsieur De Rougemont slowly entered the room. No word of inquiry burst from her lips; but her fixed and eager gaze sought with intense anxiety the expression of his countenance, whereon melancholy and doubt were too plainly stamped, and the meaning of which it required not words to construe or interpret.

The sudden extinction of her hopes, the confirmation of her worst fears, acted not upon the withered heart or scathed mind

mind of sister Mary, as they might have done on those who have not long borne the load of misery or sorrow. More like the bolt of death, it gave, as it pierced her bosom, a momentary activity of spirit, more fearful than all the exhaustion which grief can produce, and which nothing but despair could create. Even the deathlike colour of her cheek and lips became at once changed; her fixed and glazed eye became animated and enlightened; her delicate and feeble limbs no longer refused her support, but with a degree of energy which neither philosophy or patience could summon—which human prudence could not command, she hastily arose, and laying her hand upon the arm of the afflicted priest, demanded solemnly "the fate of her child?" as she had long designated her beloved Julia.

"She is not to be found," said monsieur De Rougemont; "but let me supplicate

supplicate you, my dear friend, to be calm; call religion to your aid: all hope has not yet left us."

"Hope! true, there is hope indeed," she slowly replied—"but not here: there is yet comfort—but not on earth: there is still joy—but not in this world. Oh that this heart—this seared, this bursting heart, were still and cold, ere I had seen this hour! Could not long years of pain and torture undeserved, have averted this last, worst blow? But we must not repine: we are told it is sin to grieve, and long I shall not mourn: it will soon be past, and I shall be at rest."

The wretched lady was at length relieved by tears, which flowed long and plenteously, and in some degree tended to sooth her; and at length agreed to accompany monsieur De Rougemont to the room below, not in the hope of diverting sorrow from her mind, but to resist that apathy which the stunning effects

effects of his arrival were calculated in solitude to produce.

The night closed in dark and lowering—the wind whistled shrilly among the mountain pines—dark and heavy clouds obscured the horizon—the plain was bleak, and desolate, and barren, and the whole scene corresponded with her state of mind, as sister Mary lingered at the casement, and contemplated the wintry and sombre appearance of all without. The priest was occupied in reading near the fire, while Fritz, with many a half-suppressed and heavy sigh, was adding huge pine logs on the hearth. —"Ha! what's that?" he suddenly exclaimed, in a tone which startled sister Mary, and made the book drop from the hand of monsieur De Rougemont: "'twas but the wind perhaps, your reverence; but I could have sworn I had heard the sound of carriage wheels. No, I am deceived."

"Is

"Is the char out?" demanded the priest.

"No, all has been under cover this hour past, your reverence."

"Hark!" said sister Mary, from her place at the window—"a carriage certainly approaches. Great Heaven, should it be——"

"Be tranquil, madam: indulge not thus your hopes, nor afford food to strengthen disappointment. I shall see who arrives. I pray you be not thus agitated." He instantly left the room with Fritz, while with intense interest, and breathless impatience, sister Mary, unable to move, listened to the sounds without. The carriage evidently drew nearer and nearer: it paused—a slight rush was heard from the hall; but all was again silence: footsteps now quickly approached; several persons traversed the vestibule; the door was thrown open, and Julia, her beloved, her mourned,

ed, her injured Julia, was in her arms, hung on her neck, pressed her warmly to her bosom, and kissed rapidly the tears of joy which flowed down her pallid cheek. The ecstacy of delight in which she was wrapped, suspended all observation of aught beside; and it was not until she had given full expression to her feelings, that Julia called her friends' attention to major Beauclerc, who had been occupied in detailing to monsieur De Rougemont the circumstances of her rescue.

With looks of gratitude and joy, sister Mary listened to the tale; but when it was concluded, there was much yet to say—much that the modesty of the narrator had withheld; but that Julia detailed, with a degree of eloquence that came warm from her heart, and brought the colour to the hero's face. As she dwelt with emphasis and gratitude on all

all she owed to him, no false delicacy, no affectation, restrained her tongue. She felt she must do justice to his conduct, properly to evince the obligation he had generously imposed upon them all; nor were her looks less eloquent than her words, now that she was amid her friends, and now that she was allowed to utter all she had long felt; yet, like Beauclerc, when she had finished, there was yet much which might have been told, had the tongue dared expound it; there was pure and ardent love towards him; there was admiration the most refined for all his noble qualities; there was the warm, but yet the chaste, desire that she could repay all she owed him, by attaching her future fate to his; for without him she felt earth would be a desert, and life solitude: but her fond and innocent feelings were deposited in her heart's sanctuary; there she knew they must remain

main concealed, but cherished; but she was not aware that the hidden treasure could be seen; that in those bright blue eyes might be discerned all she believed shut up from human insight; that they were the windows of her thoughts, and that sister Mary had already read, largely and clearly beheld, the emotion by which it was inspired.

The silence that succeeded the words of Julia might, for a moment, have become awkward to him who had listened, and to her who had spoken, had not a noise, which made the high roof of the hall reecho to the sound, diverted the attention of all present; it was like the roar of a hundred boys let loose from school—or a dozen midshipmen at dinner at a Portsmouth inn—or town and gown at Oxford—or the Green Man at the Westminster election—or the coronation anthem at Covent Garden, in Lent—

Lent—or (could it be) three Rowland Hills in a rage—an Indian war-hoop—the French Chamber of Deputies—a Swiss card-party—a German serenade—an Italian bravura—it was like a hundred other things, which might be well in their places; but in that old chateau, so long the seat of silence and melancholy, nothing could be reasonably supposed to produce it but fire—or an earthquake—or a flood—or the fall of Mont Blanc—or the Alps and the Jura changing sides in a mountain-reel; but it was none of these—it was merely Fritz giving a lesson to his fellow-domestics, assembled to accomplish a right English huzza, in honour of Julia and major Beauclerc, initiating them in the mysteries of a real British cheer, with all the due accompanying melody of that guttural chorus.

As soon as this extraordinary rumour had

had subsided, the door was opened by the self-constituted seneschal of the day, whose spirits had undergone a rapid transition from gloom to joy, and on whom the return of his mistress had conferred a degree of Bacchanalian rapture, which had usurped the gravity of many years, and mocked the soberness of his silvery head.

By dint of threat and persuasion, he had formed a procession of fellow-servants, of either sex and every rank, and entering, with all the solemnity of a college beadle, began an oration, addressed to the major, which promised to be as tedious as the peroration was confused, had not it, and the verticality of Fritz, been destroyed at the same moment by an unforeseen accident. This ancient lord of misrule, having congregated all the servants of the chateau, had left Turc (a fine dog of the St.

St. Bernard breed) to bring up the rear of the procession, and although long-established etiquette had denied him admittance within the precincts of the saloon, he no sooner perceived Julia, to whom he was more attached than any other, than, regardless of the Ciceronian chief, and the importance of his functions, he wedged himself gradually through the crowd, until the legs of Fritz remained the last and only barrier between him and his mistress. With a spring he bounded forward, and bearing Fritz on his broad shoulders, would have deposited him at the feet of Julia, had not major Beauclerc saved the old man from being offered up as the *spolia opima* of Turc.

This catastrophe at once overcame the assumed seriousness of the domestic train; and as soon as he was placed upon his feet, the titters of the retreating

troop so far roused his indignation, that he pursued them, to wreak his ministerial vengeance on the culprits, and rid the astonished party of his speech and presence.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VII.

She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air.

Lara.

The Maniac.

THE pleasure afforded by the return of Julia was in some degree diminished by the uncertainty of monsieur De Rougemont and herself, with respect to the movements of her father. Christmas had passed, and yet, for the last two months, no intelligence had been attained respecting him; and the last letters which he had written rather tended to increase than allay the anxiety of his daughter. To her he had not yet made any communication of the object of his

journey; but it was evident that he had been the prey of doubt, and care, and sorrow. The season of the year, the obstacles then thrown in the way of correspondence, were the only circumstances calculated to calm her fears; but apprehension would too frequently prevail; and the ill-disguised uneasiness of monsieur De Rougemont did not fail to augment its force.

Sister Mary, whose health had been gradually restored since the restoration of Julia, announced her intention of returning to her convent, as soon as her young friend should be in certainty of her father's fate; and Julia, who had at first dreaded that the introduction of major Beauclerc would have been the means of hastening her departure, was happy to find that she had not only been soon reconciled to his presence, but that he had early become a decided favourite with her.

The

The major had been prevailed upon, with little difficulty, to await the arrival of news of Mr. Everard, or his return to Leaspach; and the delay which the disappointment caused was endured with all the philosophy of one who lived with all he loved, and to whom each hour and minute brought an increase of joy, uncontemplated and unknown before. On her part, happy as had been the cloudless tenor of her former life, she now awoke each morning with novel, and renewed, and lively hopes of happiness for the coming day, only shaded at intervals by her father's silence.

The commencement of the year had been marked by a continuance of beautiful weather, which had attracted the major and monsieur De Rougemont frequently far from the chateau during the morning, while their evenings were

generally devoted to reading, or the pleasures of chess. It was while they were thus occupied, that sister Mary and Julia had strolled from the chateau, and the extreme beauty of the night had induced them, under the safeguard of Turc, to prolong their walk to a greater distance than ordinary, until at length, conscious of the necessity of returning, they were glad to repose themselves from the fatigue they had already begun to experience, and they sat upon the trunk of a tree by the wayside, long regarding, in silence, the enchanting effect of the moonbeam upon the surface of the lake.

" How solemn and how lovely is this scene!" observed sister Mary, at length; " where is the heart that could remain unmoved, amidst the still and tranquil glory of such a night! However the factitious aids to piety and devotion may

may be necessary amidst the hum of cities, how poor in comparison are cloistered edifices, and all the pomp and circumstance of religious rite, in recalling human thoughts from their involuntary wanderings, to the effect of this sublime development of creation's beauties, when in solemn silence Heaven itself seems to invite and listen to our prayer, and gives assurance, in the earthly brightness which surrounds us, of its favouring mercy, in those happier regions 'where the weary cease to labour,' and 'where no tear is seen or sigh is heard."

"It were almost sinful, my dear friend," said Julia, "at such a time, to let our desires rove beyond this scene, or to seek for change. But even here, with you who ever loved me, whom I so love, ungrateful though it be, my wishes still will wander towards my native land. It may seem presumptuous to sigh for more than we possess, but

were my father's mind restored to peace, would you extend to me your fostering care, beneath that clime which gave me birth, I feel I should have nothing more to hope or sigh for."

"That an expectation so natural may be fulfilled, that your father's happiness may be accomplished, will be my prayer, my dearest Julia; but for me, my love, my doom has long been sealed, my fate determined, and my hopes extinguished; but humbly do I bow beneath the dispensation of high Heaven, and patiently I drink the cup of bitterness offered to my lips. Affliction and sorrow have been my portion, and so severe have been the visitations I have been destined to endure, that death alone can erase the impression branded on my heart and mind. Yes," exclaimed sister Mary, while she ardently folded Julia in her embrace, "yes, I will pray for you, for your happiness when far away from me; I will

I will earnestly supplicate that you may never know what I have known. If the hour must arrive when you shall be torn from me, I will strive to submit to the last hardest trial of my patience and fortitude. It will be the latest pang reserved for my wounded heart, and that endured, I shall fly to solitude and prayer, and mourn the temptation which awakened my best affections, to leave them crushed for ever."

While Julia strove to sooth her friend, the dog that had lain quietly at their feet sprung forwards, and was soon lost in a horsepath that branched from that part of the road where they were seated, and which led from the neighbouring town to the chateau, by a route less circuitous and long than the highway offered. They listened to his bark as he proceeded onwards, until he had apparently stopped; and at the next

moment they heard the distant paces of a horse.

"We have, I fear, been most imprudent," said sister Mary, rising hastily, and drawing Julia's arm within her own; "the hour is later than I thought: for Heaven's sake, let us hasten our return."

Quickly sensible to alarm, since the accident she had lately encountered, Julia hurried forward; but much as they exerted themselves, the person behind gained fast upon them; and while sister Mary, overcome by the efforts she had made, and still labouring under the effects of recent illness, at length found her strength wholly subdued, and sank exhausted on a bank by the road side, as the horseman, who had redoubled his speed, had gained their side. Leaping from his saddle, he approached the trembling

bling Julia, who hid her face, in fear of some unknown danger.

"Julia, my child!" he exclaimed, and at the same moment her father pressed his beloved daughter to his heart.

The moon, which had been for a moment obscured, now suddenly shone on the figure of sister Mary, reclining on the bank, when, to the surprise of Julia, he released himself from her arms, and was at the feet of her friend.—"Jane! my love! my only love! look on me! Speak to me! Dear injured angel, let me hear your voice! Say, oh say that you forgive me—my poor, poor Jane!"

Pale as death, with eyes gazing with wild intensity on him who knelt before her, for some moments she breathed not, spoke not, moved not; but at length, a

deep and heavy groan seemed to alleviate her overcharged heart; and she had barely force to throw her arms around him, and wept bitterly as she clung to his embrace.

Long did they thus remain mingling their tears, in what might be almost deemed the sad communion of that moment; the pain which each had suffered—years, long years of wretchedness, endured by either—the blighting remembrance of that fearful separation—their young love—the passion cherished in solitude by each, which grew and strengthened amid decay and desolation, all now had been, and were no more; in one instant, eternity had been their hope's only goal, and that long course had been passed over; they were in each other's arms—they felt the tumultuous throbbings of each other's hearts—those hearts so long dead, and cold, and withered;

withered; they gazed upon each other's faces—those faces changed not by age but care; they heard again those words, which neither dared before to breathe, but in the feverish dream of agonizing remembrance. Their past grief rendered them distrustful of present joy; they feared to fall back to the abyss whence they had emerged, and again they clasped each other with wild and fearful fondness, as if they dreaded their happiness might escape their grasp.

"Say that you forgive me, my love, my injured, my long-lost love," incessantly repeated lord Bridgenorth, ere she on whom he looked could give utterance to her feelings. "Pardon me, my wife—my long-loved wife! Pardon all you have endured! Say that you hate me not! Say you will yet be happy! Say that you love me!"

"I do—I do indeed!" she exclaimed; "never

"never have I ceased to love you, Henry; never was your image absent from my thoughts, by night or day. Can it be true, thou art my own again—never—never to part more? We must never part again, Henry. Say that we never shall."

"Never—oh never, my love. Blessed be God for this moment's joy!—this holy hour! Heaven itself smiles on our union, and will always smile. Come, my Julia."

Julia had knelt beside them while they had breathed forth their rapture, and she now wept on her mother's bosom.

"My child, my Julia," exclaimed the latter, "is it permitted me to call you thus once more? Think of the agony of that fond mother, as for long years she watched you, her name unknown—her kindred to you unacknowledged, disallowed

disallowed—she who hung over you in your sleep, and then, then only dared call you hers—her daughter! God bless my child!"

Long did the parents and the child pour forth to each other the effusions of their new-found joy, and to Heaven their gratitude, until they were awakened to other thoughts by long-continued shouts, which were heard at a distance.

Pressing again the dear objects of his affections to his breast, they took their way to the chateau, from which direction the noise proceeded, and which, they soon were aware, arose from the alarm of its inhabitants, at the lengthened absence of Julia. But another cause had caused a general movement in the household, namely, the arrival of lord Bridgenorth's horse, who, during his owner's absence, had been left at the neighbouring

neighbouring town, and who, on finding himself alone, had pursued his way to the chateau, accompanied by Turc, whose extravagant marks of joy proved to those aware of his fidelity and intelligence, that something extraordinary had occurred.

The party assembled at supper beneath the roof of Leaspach, might have created envy in the best, if the good could be envious, or joy a subject of jealousy. Monsieur De Rougemont had long been entrusted, under the sacred seal of confession, with the misfortunes of lord and lady Bridgenorth; but if his priestly duties had not forbade him to violate the secret confided to him, the belief of his wife's guilt, founded on the circumstances we have recorded, and the injury likely to ensue to her interests, by the consequent alienation of her child, prevented any useless interference

ference on his part; but long aware of the feelings by which they were actuated towards each other during their estrangement, the venerable man beheld, with unmixed delight, the reunion of those whom he had long loved and esteemed; and as he extended his regards towards Julia, seated between her parents, caressed and caressing, the tide of happiness arose from his heart to his eyes, and fervently did he bestow the half-heard *benedicite* upon the parents and the child. But there was still another person, who had been all along equally well informed with the priest; and the agitation of Fritz, during the first evening of sister Mary's residence at Leaspach, had been excited by the recognition of his adored mistress, and the difficulty with which, in suppressing his joy, he obeyed the sign she had emphatically made him, not to betray her to her child; but the long restrained current

rent of delight was now permitted to flow freely, and it burst forth with greater fury from its lengthened confinement; and the old man, in witnessing the arrival of that day which he had continued to prophecy would come at last, lost the little measure of prudence age and care had left him, and exhibited all the inconsistency and folly of that childishness to which, for the second time, he was probably drawing near. Without the power of performing the usual duties of his station, he jealously refused another hand to serve than his own; and the consequences were such as only the pleasure which prevailed could patiently support.

After having usurped the priestly functions, by bestowing the unction of the melted butter liberally over monsieur De Rougemont's habit, and poured the claret into his enormous snuff-box—

after

after having, in regarding his mistress, let a roast capon slide gracefully, with its river of gravy, upon the table, without its attendant accompaniment of a dish—poured out a glass of the strongest kischenwasser for major Beauclerc in lieu of water, thereby nearly suffocating at once the soldier and the swain—and various other eccentricities, he was persuaded to refer, reluctantly, his ministerial occupation to other hands; and taking his position behind his master's chair, was content to soliloquize at his leisure, but not in silence, varying his solitary eloquence with occasional bursts of laughter and noisy exclamations, until the repast was ended.

Lord Bridgenorth soon learned the accident which had occurred to his Julia, and all that was due on his part to her noble preserver; and the warmest expressions of gratitude were bestowed by

by the parent on him who had been the saviour of his daughter; nor was he an uninterested spectator of that scene of joy, and the rapture of Julia at the events of that happy day was expressed fully in her eyes, which sometimes turned unconsciously towards the major, who would not have lost that look of love for aught but her beauteous self. She was now the perfect image of what her lovely mother had been—the same form and features—the same purity, and truth, and innocence; and major Beauclerc gazed with rapture on so fair a creature, and his heart beat high as he hoped, and only as yet hoped, once to call her his.

"Julia, my love," said her father, "you must prepare to-morrow for visitors, who ought ere this to have been here; they are old friends of ours, and will share largely the happiness we have earned this day." He then informed lady

lady Bridgenorth of the intended visit of colonel Montrose and his wife, and the alteration that had taken place in the destiny of the once fair widow, and her change of name—" But she is not the only person who has resigned their former appellation—you also, my love," he continued, addressing his wife, " must take another title."

" Is lord Bridgenorth then dead?" she demanded.

" Both my brothers are no more; and Thomas was fated to lose his children ere he died: we are now possessors of the title and estates of Bridgenorth."

" Must I change my name too?" innocently demanded Julia.

An emphatic hem! from old Fritz interrupted her father's answer, in attracting the attention of all the party; while conscious of his fault, he quitted the apartment without ceremony.

The

The confusion of Julia was however of short duration, as major Beauclerc hastened to mention his intimate acquaintance with colonel Montrose, with whom he had long served during the Peninsular campaigns.

"I hope they will remain some time with us," observed lady Bridgenorth.

"Not long, my love, for we must all prepare for England, and they will accompany us: my presence there has become so indispensable, that I propose to entrust to my excellent friend, monsieur De Rougemont, the arrangement of my affairs, and the disposal of my property in this quarter, if he will not decline the task, and revisit our native shores with the least possible delay. I hope no obstacle will prevent your being of our party, Beauclerc, as our happiness will be incomplete without your presence, and it will afford me joy to welcome you to Bridgenorth Castle."

After

After a short interval, lord and lady Bridgenorth retired to the library, where he related to her the almost miraculous discovery of the iniquity of which she had been so long the victim, and which had stimulated the zeal of Montrose, and led to that happy meeting. When he had concluded, lady Bridgenorth kneeled in humble gratitude before the all-wise and merciful Disposer of events, and her husband warmly joined in those pure and thankful orisons, which were offered in the fullness of human happiness. With the fondest endearments, he renewed the expression of his love and tenderness; and they again joined the happy party they had left.

Quickly did the hours pass in converse; tale followed tale, in referring to the past; nor did even the good priest refuse the sparkling beverage, which went freely round; although had it not been

been for him, we know not when the party would have separated, as he was the first to perceive the late approach of dawn, which at length called on them to retire.

In a few days, colonel and Mrs. Montrose arrived at the chateau; and the meeting on all sides is easier to be imagined than described. The former warmly greeted in Beauclerc an esteemed fellow-soldier, while the latter divided her affectionate caresses between lady Bridgenorth and her daughter. While lord Bridgenorth was daily occupied with monsieur De Rougemont in making the necessary preparations for leaving Switzerland, his loved partner seldom left his side, as if fearful of again being deprived of what was most dear to her on earth. The colonel and Mrs. Montrose, major Beauclerc, and Julia, however, feared not frequently to brave the

the rigours of a wintry day, and furnished with traineaux, they visited mountain, plain, and lake, extending their excursions far on every side, in that delightful piece of conveyance.

It was in one of those expeditions to a remote and uninhabited spot on the Jura, whence a magnificent prospect was afforded of the varied beauties of the surrounding country, that the colonel, while pausing to regard it, thought he heard a groan at a short distance. Descending with major Beauclerc from their traineaux, they proceeded in the direction whence it had been heard, and discovered a miserable and wretched woman, apparently expiring through cold and privation, and stretched upon the snow. Raising her in their arms, the major hastened to summon one of the domestics, and desiring the other to conduct Mrs. Montrose and Julia in the

traineau of the latter to the chateau, they transported the wretched being to that which was unoccupied, and returned with their utmost speed to Leaspach.

Placed on a chair in the servants' hall, cordials were administered, and she soon in some degree revived to strength, although her words and gestures indicated that her reason was deranged. Upon the entrance of Julia she became violently affected, and the former recognized in the miserable woman her former companion Ursule. Recollecting her exertions in her favour, Julia addressed her in terms of commiseration and sympathy, while monsieur DeRougemont, who had heard her history, strove to sooth her agitation.

"It is of no use," she at length faintly said—"it is of no use—hell must have its due—furies await me—the hour

is

is come, and no prayers can save me—no intercession plead for me—no tears wash away my crime—no beam of mercy dispel the darkness of despair! Oh, lady! why was I severed from you, or why did I not then die? for I should have died in hope—but now, great God, I dare not—cannot pray! How came she here? who saw her enter?" she exclaimed, shuddering convulsively, and gazing wildly at the door with maniac look; "the lady Teresa here too! why does she follow me? The grave covered her—these eyes saw it, yet she comes. You do not know her?" she said, to monsieur De Rougemont; "it is that blackness that clothes her face—see how 'tis swoln—'twas poison! She comes nearer, nearer—hold her at a distance from me—save me! save me!"

The crazed wretch here covered her face with her hands, to shield her from

the creature of her imagination; but after a moment her features assumed a look of savage sternness, the courage of despair, and she demanded those around her to assist her to rise; but when upon her feet, they were still obliged to support her from falling, as she continued, in a low and solemn tone—"Ay, I will speak to her—the priest is here—he must know all.—Why do you torment me, lady? how came you to the dungeon? why travel you upon the moor—upon the mountain—in the forest—by night—by day? *he* gave the poison—but he's gone to his account: I saw him, chained and manacled, led forth—but you were there—you saw it too—you saw the greybeards, how they urged him to repent—you saw his pale and haggard looks—how his lips trembled as the axe descended, and his head rolled in his life-blood. Mock me not thus—you are revenged—we are all dead—I come the last—

last—you see they take me—fiends—fiends—she smiles, by Heaven!—drag me not thus—one moment—help!—tear me not thus—lady Teresa—Marco—Roderigo!"

Screaming with horror, and struggling with that strange and unnatural force which attends the last crisis of despair and madness, it was with difficulty she was held. Long and convulsively she strove with those who grasped her; large drops of perspiration ran down her brow—her eyes flashed fire—her hair stood erect—her mouth foamed—her veins became black and swoln—and after a desperate effort, which freed her from those about her, she fell forward—her heart was broken, and she died without a groan.

All stood in silence, horror-struck at the awful and appalling spectacle of the

last hour of guilt; and it was some time ere the domestics could attend to the directions of monsieur De Rougemont, to bear the body to the chapel previous to interment.

There was so far method in the madness of the wretched Ursule, that her last words were the literal description of what she deemed she had witnessed. After the arrest of the marchese Graziani, he had been transported to Turin, to take his trial for crimes against the state. On his arrival there, he had dispatched a messenger to summon in haste the victim of his early profligacy—the pander of his later pleasures—his associate in guilt. The passion which she had deemed extinct in her breast for the author of her calamities, revived at this intelligence; and she travelled with the utmost speed to obey his mandate; but the course of justice had been more rapid—

pid—he had already been condemned to the ignominious punishment of saluting the scaffold with his lips, and afterwards to perpetual banishment where his sovereign might direct; and as she bent her way to the prison, she met the procession that conducted him to the spot destined for his disgrace. She rushed towards him, but the guards, and the ministering capuchins, drove her back, and she followed, with cries of despair, the pale and deathlike culprit to the place of execution. She looked earnestly at the preparations, and became assured in her own mind that he had been led to die. The horror of the moment was too powerful for reason to sustain; she left the place on foot, ere the ceremony had concluded, and had travelled long and in misery, supported by casual charity, and was directing her maniac steps to the cottage where she had dwelt with her husband

and her son, when extenuated from cold, fatigue, and want, she sank upon the snow, where she had been discovered by colonel Montrose. Her remains were deposited in the chapel of Leaspach, and the "*dies iræ*" chanted for her soul's repose.

CHAPTER VIII.

If there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this.

Lalla Rookh.

Bridgenorth.

THE moment had at length arrived, when the wish of Julia to revisit her native land was to be fulfilled, and that she was to bid adieu to Switzerland; but who ever left long associations—who ever abandoned that spot where childhood passed its innocent and happy hours, without feelings of sorrow and regret? If even the companions who shared our misery become endeared—if custom can attach us even to dreariness

and desolation—if the Maltese can deem his rock the garden of the world, and the Highlander his mist-clad mountain more beauteous than the fertile plain—what must not be the feeling with which we regard for the last time that more than earthly scene which the Pays de Vaud displays—that assemblage of creation's wonders, which no eye can regard but with feelings of awe, of reverence, and of delight; where all that distinguishes the happiest and least favoured climes is congregated, and where nature unfolds the richest treasures of her museum, to enchant the view and elevate the mind.

Years of habitual contemplation of that glorious scene, had not rendered Julia less sensible to their beauties; and it was on the vigil of her departure, that she lingered long at the casement, regarding the crimson glow of the declining

ing orb of day on the hoary summit of Mont Blanc, and its last purple flush upon the calm waters of the lake beneath. Entranced by the manifold reflections of the moment, which reverted to all the circumstances of her childhood, she did not perceive the entrance of major Beauclerc, as he placed himself by her side, contemplating her lovely countenance, enlightened by the enthusiasm of the moment, and on which the last beam of light cast its gentle lustre, and more fully developed the emotion which she felt.—"Farewell!" at length she sighed; "a long, a last farewell!" but the sigh was repeated near her, and she started, on observing that he had been the witness of her enthusiasm.

"I hope I have not offended you," he said; "but it has been permitted me so often, to share with you the enjoyment that this beauteous scene affords—to partake those feelings it inspires, that

in quitting it, I wished to associate hereafter in my memory your image with it—to combine your loveliness with its beauty in my mind; and often as my thoughts shall recur to what we now behold, I may be permitted to unite the idea of her with whom I had the happiness to regard it."

"I thank you for the compliment," answered Julia, blushing; "but I fear the recollections of the majesty of this scene will not allow the intrusion of inferior—of less worthy objects."

"Say not so," he warmly exclaimed; "not all the glories of the material world can rival or eclipse the more perfect animate and moral beauty, which has long, dare I say it without offence, commanded my reverence, my adoration, and my love. Never, Miss Everard, never can that impression be effaced; to the latest hour of my life, it will be found as indeliby engraven on my

my heart, as it is now that I presume to declare it at your feet. Pardon me, Miss Everard—pardon the rashness of this moment; but ascribe to my devotion, to my boundless love, the expression of my passion—of that passion in which life itself is wrapt—in which is the hope, the very life of life."

Julia strove to withdraw the hand he held, but her confusion was at its height, and she could not move through agitation.—" Indeed—major Beauclerc—indeed, I must hear no more. I entreat you to rise—I pray."

" Say then, Julia, my beloved Julia, that you forgive me."

" I do, indeed; do I not owe all to you—life, and all that renders life desirable? But pray arise; you give me pain, major Beauclerc, to see you thus."

" I would sacrifice my existence rather, Miss Everard; but ere I quit this spot, let me supplicate, with respect the most

most sacred, devotion the most unbounded, that you will confirm the assurance of that hope."

"I cannot—must not reply," stammered Julia; "let me retire, I pray you."

"I have gone too far to recede, Julia," he replied; "my fate is in your hands; my happiness or misery hang upon those lips. Let me but hope—give me, my beloved Julia, this hand, in signal of that hope, and I shall be for ever happy."

He resigned the hand he held, and the next moment it was extended towards him. He rapturously seized it, and devoured it with burning kisses, when the door opened, and colonel Montrose appeared.

"Front rank, kneel—what! manœuvres not given over yet, Beauclerc?"

Julia

Julia had fled the room with the rapidity of lightning, while major Beauclerc hesitated not frankly to confess to his friend the true nature of the scene he had witnessed—his passion for, and pretensions to the love of Julia.

"Now, my good fellow," replied the colonel, "you are gratified probably with the idea of telling me news, and are like a newspaper heading an article with 'Exclusive Intelligence,' while its contents have grown stale a week before. Do not flatter yourself all the world is blind: I have watched all your sentimentalities since I have been in this house, and as I am a bad hand at secrets, why, I mentioned it to lord and lady Bridgenorth three days ago, and told them to be on their guard, for you were a slippery hand."

"For God's sake, Montrose, speak seriously; you never could have used that

that language. What did lord Bridgenorth say? What will he think of me?"

"There it is to be a love-sick swain! What would you think of giving three words of command before a soldier could obey either. But as you look sheepish as the rear file of an awkward squad, when he faces about the wrong way—or as a Spanish hidalgo, when he hears the commencement of a battle overture, and as I have been in your way myself for at least a week, and absolutely was fool enough to dirty the knees of my pantaloons, and used to make sheep's eyes as soon as the dinner-cloth was removed, why I'll try to resolve your questions."

"But, for Heaven's sake, be serious, colonel."

"What the devil would the fellow have? I am not laughing; would you have me cry?"

"You are torturing me, Montrose."

"Torturing! that is a word you learned

learned in Spain, with the tent whistle and stamp of the foot to call the batmen. Well then, firstly, as the brigade chaplain used to begin the five minutes sermon—I am to speak seriously; granted—but the capitulating army will be pleased to have patience, and not, as other capitulating armies, give their whole thoughts to the *baggage*."

"A truce to your joking."

"The truce ought to have place always before articles are sent in; remember that, Beauclerc, or you will play the deuce with your generalship: but let us on. Secondly, I never could have used such language.—Answer. Agreed; as I said all a friend and fellow-soldier ought to say, and was proud to say, of the honour of a companion in arms."

"You are an excellent fellow, Montrose."

"Thirdly—What did lord Bridgenorth

north say? Answer—Nothing; but hemmed a little—stared a bit at Mont Blanc, as if he had seen it for the first time—observed the weather was warm, when to my knowledge the thermometer was three degrees below zero—put his hand into his snuff-box, to take a lozenge, and made a wry face at his mistake."

"Did he seem displeased?"

"About as much so as the commander-in-chief, when he is enabled to bestow a commission upon the unfriended and fatherless boy of some old soldier—or as my wife, when I tell her she looks ten years younger since her marriage—or as the old Hessian lord of the bedchamber here, Fritz, when he watches one of your love glances towards his young mistress; as, in fact, if you mind your p's and q's, you will march out with flying colours, and all the honours of war."

"My

"My dear good fellow, you have given me life, hope, and——"

"Now reserve all your fine speeches, if you please, for Julia, and just take my advice. As you have, ere you intended it, been down upon your knees to the daughter, things must not stop there, for her peace and your own honour. Lord Bridgenorth is in the library—we will make the attack at once. I will send my wife to her ladyship; and although I believe we are not opening the campaign *secundum artem*, there is more honour in taking the enemy by surprise —march!"

"But I doubt."

"Did lord Wellington ever doubt?—d—— it, sir! where would you and I have been, had he done so?—march, I say. Bridgenorth is an old soldier, and will admire our tactics. Hold up your head—eyes right—left foot forward—advance!"

So

So saying, the colonel led the half-trembling major to the study, where lord Bridgenorth was just ruminating on the words he had heard from the colonel.

The family of Beauclerc was noble, his fortune large, his professional and general expectations great, his character in public estimation high, in private faultless, his personal and moral qualities of the first order; so that, with the preassured esteem of lord and lady Bridgenorth, a feeling correspondent to his own, on the part of Julia, the colonel's blunt announcement of his purpose, and his own honest but impassioned eloquence, he left lord Bridgenorth's presence the happiest of earthly beings, and sought Julia once more, to tell the beauteous and blushing girl the promised assurance of his bliss, on other and happier shores.

The

The next day the happy party quitted Switzerland, and entered France, monsieur De Rougemont remaining to act in the final arrangement of lord Bridgenorth's affairs, on the termination of which he was to rejoin them in England.

Few difficulties occurred to their progress; and ere the spring commenced, lord and lady Bridgenorth were in that city, where they had separated in anguish and horror, and which they revisited more endeared to each by the misery either had endured.

The evening sun gilded with its last rays the small spire of the church of Bridgenorth, while its bells sounded joyously and long, beneath the flag which waved from the steeple summit, displaying the arms of Bridgenorth, and announcing some event of no ordinary interest.

terest. Groups of villagers, of either sex, were assembled on the lawn before Bridgenorth Castle; domestics in rich and splendid liveries were making preparations, beneath marquees, for a supper on the green; and musicians tuning their various instruments, announced the prospect of a ball, for the numerous and humble, but contented guests, that each moment arrived.

It was one of those lovely evenings of an English May, when earth displayed all those beauties with which bounteous Nature has decked our happy soil; and the fair and joyous faces of the female peasants, their neat and modest attire, and still more modest looks, with the plain, manly, and honest appearance of the men, shewed them worthy of all the benefits, moral and material, with which, above all other lands, England has been permitted to enjoy.

To

To the peasantry succeeded the equipages of the nobility and gentry, not only of the immediate vicinity, but those of many who resided at a distance, and whom respect or curiosity had attracted to the castle.

Amidst the foliage of the trees, now began to appear the illuminated windows of a small chapel, rich in all the colours with which earlier artists were enabled to grace the temples of religion; and in excluding the bold glare of day, throwing soft and mellowed tints of light on the costly, but venerable appendages of the Roman church.

It was not pride, or the love of pomp, nor the taste of gorgeous vanity, that had dictated the splendid preparations of that evening within the walls of Bridgenorth, but it was the reverence entertained by its noble owner for the usages

usages of the past, and a conviction, in certain respects, of their advantages over many of the institutions of modern refinement, which, in rejecting much that was erroneous in the customs of antiquity, has often substituted, in manners as in architecture, a florid style, calculated for momentary ornament, to that venerable and impressive order which survived through ages, in undecayed strength and beauty, and still awakens feelings of awe, reverence, and admiration for the days gone by.

The earliest duty of lord Bridgenorth, on his arrival in England, had been to bear the expression of that loyalty, fidelity, and truth, which had distinguished a long line of ancestry, to the feet of his sovereign, in the person of that prince, who, to his parent's glory, his own honour, and the welfare of his country, had been summoned to the high

high vocation which the visitation of Providence had disenabled the righteous and aged monarch to fulfil. It was from that proud and honourable source that the last male descendant of the house of Bridgenorth had received the gratuitous and unexpected assurance, that with him the name he bore should not expire—and that in him, on whom he proposed to bestow the greatest good he possessed, should survive the baronial honours of his race.

The consideration of evincing the value which he placed upon the boon of royalty, but more the feeling with which he regarded the event of his daughter's nuptials, had determined lord Bridgenorth to give to their celebration all the ceremonial circumstance which the rites of his communion, the sacrament itself, and the customs of his predecessors, demanded. If modern taste be

startled at the more Gothic ideas of lord Bridgenorth, in giving this publicity to an act which recent refinement has made one of smuggled privacy, yet modern morality, if it pauses to reflect, may not be wholly blinded to some of the advantages which attend the proffering of those solemn vows in the presence of society, and rendering a congregated multitude the witnesses to that holy contract which unites the future destinies of two individuals, and may be considered (especially with the noble, the rich, and powerful) a covenant with the social world, to promote, by their example, morality, fidelity, and truth. The misnamed modesty that would shrink from such an exposure, may merit compassion, but it is to be feared that it is but little blended with piety, and that it stands a solitary and naked virtue, unaccompanied by a sense of higher duty, or of the awful nature of

of its engagement. Speculation might even proceed so far, in a calculation of the effects consequent upon the mode adopted in olden time, in comparison with that pursued by the living votaries of fashion, as to predict the loss of many fees to Mr. Scarlet, or future barristers of eminence—the curtailment of many closely-printed columns in the public journals—the privation of much amusement to ancient bachelors—the occasion lost to venerable spinsters, of thanking their stars that they have lived in " single blessedness," and consoling themselves, in the actual guilt, for the past indifference of mankind; and leaving to the " noble lord on the woolsack" more leisure for the affairs of unfortunate suitors in the Court of Chancery.

Having thus perhaps imperfectly attempted to justify the scene which we have alluded to, we may proceed in our

detail. It was the time appointed for the marriage of Julia, and never did lovelier form present itself at the altar, or purer lips repeat the assent to that plighted troth which the manly heart of major Beauclerc had assured her.

When the solemn tones of the organ died away, monsieur De Rougemont bestowed the benediction upon the youthful and happy couple; and long and many were the greetings which flowed from all sides, and warm the congratulations of their friends; for who was not their friend at that moment? and where was that exclusive selfishness which could be callous to their joy, and not participate in their virtuous transport?

Vain would it be to attempt the description of the feelings of major Beauclerc and his bride; for who could ever give

give words to ecstacy, or what language could convey the bright and unsullied rapture which they shared?

It was at the festive board that the reflections of his guests were occasionally diverted from their happiness, to contemplate the pleasure that beamed from the countenance of lord and lady Bridgenorth, as their eyes rested with parental pride upon their children, and only wished their felicity might be as perfect as that they were now permitted to taste.

The gay and mirthful crowds without readily responded to the festivity that reigned within the castle walls, and all were content; for the feast was dedicated to the union of all that was noble in man to all that was fair and lovely in womankind. If truth and honour, if youth and beauty, love and piety, can

be any assurance of continued happiness, we may predict that Julia and her husband continue blest in each other, and lord and lady Bridgenorth the fond and grateful witnesses of their bliss.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

Fate is abroad.

Tamerlane, Act V. Scene 1.

It was a dark and tempestuous night, in the month of December, that three men, covered by large mantles, were seen, struggling with difficulty, to descend the high, perpendicular, and dangerous rocks, that gird the bleak and desert Isle of Maretimo, against which beat the storms and waves of the Mediterranean Sea, rendered more perilous and loud by its forming the entrance of the canal of Malta, and prominently exposed to all the fury of the wintry gales at the south-western point of the Island of Sicily.

One of the persons appeared to act as the guide to the other two; and the deepest silence was observed, as with pain and travail they reached the craggy points of a projecting rock, overhanging one of those expansive caverns, which the tempests and surge of ages have mined in a hard and elevated cliff, whose enormous height served, in finer weather, as a point of direction to vessels entering the canal, or threatened death and destruction, when the stormy mist obscured it from the mariner's sight.

"I can proceed no further at present," in a low and faint tone said one the persons in the rear; "the rough points of rock have cut through my boots, and my feet are bathed in blood: for the love of Giesu, stop, if it be but for a moment!"

"Silence!" whispered the guide, in a subdued

subdued and fearful tone; "the watch is now set for the night, in the fort above; distant as we are, I hear, in the pauses of the gale, the challenge of the sentinel, by the rounds: if you speak, we are lost—it is too late to hesitate—certain death awaits discovery! Proceed!"

His followers slowly obeyed; while the leader muttered to himself—"Blood! it is rather late for him to wince at it now! Would that my hands were clean of it, and all for him! Villain! why don't he jest now—as when I told him of the poor wretch, his companion there, shot upon the Jura! No matter; his hour will arrive, and perhaps little deems he it is so near."

By this time, he who thus soliloquized, and preceded the others some way in their descent, had reached a long and narrow shelf, which, half way up

the cliff's side, stretched far into the cavern, and overhung the waves, which, pent within its walls, were each moment driven forwards by the resistless fury of new comers, and broke violently against the rock, with a noise that re-echoed through the extensive vault with stunning effect, and threw its angry spray even to the roof of that dark watery Pandemonium.

"Have a care there!" exclaimed the guide to the trembling and affrighted pair, who strove to reach the shelf. "Place your foot, *signore*, on the ledge beneath you. Well—now on this point—and now you are at the entrance of the hole I told you of. We are for the present safe; the devil can't reach us here; but it's dismal enough, to be sure. What a dreadful concert is kept up! by *San Michele*, it requires stout heart to stop here!" He now led them to the inner

inner extremity of the shelf, where they were glad to find another small excavation dug in the side of the principal cavern, which secured them from the wind and spray. While the *signore* sunk, exhausted by fatigue and loss of blood, the guide was employed in striking a light; and finding some dead leaves, which had served as a couch to some former unfortunate refugee, and collected some bits of a stranded boat, almost rotten through age, but which had been deposited there with care, by some shipwrecked mariner, he succeeded in producing a fire.

"*Santissima Virgine, ora pro nobis!*" said the sufferer, in an under tone.

"It is no time for pattering the litany now, *signore:* I must go forwards and look for the boat. Keep up the fire, Pietro; they'll have tough work to get her here, I promise them; but it's no use grumbling." He left them, and crept

crept to the outer end of the shelf, where he sounded a small shrill whistle, and waited attentively for a reply; but none was heard.—"Diavolo!" he exclaimed, "they can't have deceived me, surely! By San Michele, if it be so, we are lost: the fort will be alarmed at midnight, and it must now be eleven. But, hark! —yes, I heard the signal!" and a whistle sounded from the sea. "Now, strong arms and brave hearts to them."

The boat, denominated a speronara, now strove to enter the huge cave; and the skill of those who manned her was evinced by the dreadful manner in which they endeavoured to ride the boiling waves that threatened momentarily to stave the vessel against the cavern's sides. At length, with almost superhuman efforts, they arrived beneath the shelf.

"Have you ropes ready?" they demanded from below.

"Ay,

"Ay, ay—never fear. But come, *eccellenza*, not a moment must be lost, or the boat will never keep: death is in delay. Santa Maria, what a blast!"

"Quick, quick!" they called from beneath. "Giesu, hold on there, or we will be dashed to pieces. There goes an oar! Would we were safe out! Haste, Giacomo, or we are gone."

Finding the marchese unable to move, Giacomo, the guide, tied the rope round Pietro's body.—"Now be careful, Pietro—never fear! I have a tight hold.—*Piano* there—how he has slipped the rope! Have you got him in the boat?—ha!"

A short, faint struggle in the waters—one piercing shriek, was the only response, as a heavy sea rushed into the cavern, and retiring, bore with it the broken, uncoffined form of the guilty Pietro.

"It

"It is all over with him!" shouted a voice from below; "the rock has cut the rope."

"I have still enough," answered Giacomo. "Look out there, while I lower the *signore*: keep the boat well under. Steady there—hold on!"

The horror-struck and almost-insensible marchese was now slung from the shelf, and by dint of exertion, was at length received into the boat.

"Now for my turn!" said Giacomo. "Softly there: I have got so far, but 'tis a perilous leap! I shall stick fast till the next wave lifts the boat.—There it comes."

"Now! now's your time!" exclaimed the boatmen; and he dropped at the same instant with safety in the vessel. "They may whistle for us now—those infamous Sicilians!" he said, on finding himself on board.

"We

"We are not yet out of the cave," muttered one of the sailors. "Would we were! but we must try for it. Pull away, my lads: once out, up with the latteen, and we shan't fear."

The marchese Graziani had, upon aplication of the court of Sardinia to that of Sicily, been confined in the terrific fortress that crowns the island of Maretimo. Induced by the hopes of gain, one of his agents, an associate of those who had borne Julia from her home, had contrived, and so far succeeded, in effecting the escape of his master from captivity, with the loss, however, of the villanous domestic.

The Mediterranean Sea, unlike the Atlantic in that respect, is sooner influenced by the wind; and as it ceases, becomes, in a proportionate degree, earlier calm than the waters of the ocean. The wind

wind had raged with extraordinary violence during the first part of the night we refer to; but, as is frequently the case, had suddenly fallen about midnight, and the morning's dawn shewed its calm and tranquil surface, which some hours before had been so greatly disturbed and agitated. The waves, which, impelled by the wind, had risen to an enormous height, and beat with fury into the cavern we have described, had now subsided, leaving at the inner extremity of that place, a bed of sand, now dry, and exposed to view. Here, at that moment, soldiers were observed, examining the body of a man, whose form and features had been so much injured and deformed, by being repeatedly cast against the rocky sides of the cave, that they scarcely resembled those of a human being.—"Here has been precious work last night, Antonio," observed one of the men.

"Yes;

"Yes; the poor sailors have had their dose; they are all lying quiet enough on the beach without. But we must find the marchese, or we'll suffer for it. Here's a watch and papers with this body."

The soldiers gathered round their companion, and satisfied at the discovery of the corpse of him for whom they had been sent in search, dispatched one among them to inform the commandant, who on his arrival, verified the fact; and the remains of the marchese Graziani di Casa Dorata, unwept, unknelled, were deposited in the sand, where they had been cast, sepultured by stranger hands, without the solemnity of prayer, or the presence of a friend.

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Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-street, London.

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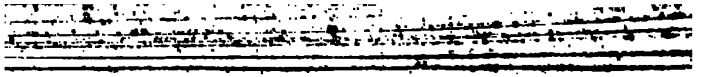
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